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"'A Plea for Missouri': The American Home Missionary Society and the Civil War-era Struggle for Missouri and the West"

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"'A Plea for Missouri': The American Home Missionary Society and the Civil War-era Struggle for Missouri and the West"

By

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Abstract

"'A Plea for Missouri': The American Home Missionary Society and the Civil War-era Struggle for Missouri and the West"

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Changes in Calvinist theology led its principal American denominations, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, in the early nineteenth century to create voluntary societies in order to conduct mission work. Founded in 1826, the American Home Missionary Society (AHMS) was America's principal domestic missionary society. It sought to spread the Gospel on the western frontier, thereby laying the foundation for an expanded, Godly American republic and the millennium foretold in the Book of Revelation. With its central location and abundant natural resources, Missouri was central to this effort.

The AHMS sent missionaries to the frontier to convert in-migrants from the eastern and southern states and foreign immigrants. By so doing, the AHMS would prevent Catholicism, rationalism and enthusiastic religion – primarily the Baptists and Methodists – from taking hold. Foreign immigrants would be assimilated. They would embrace American virtues including temperance and Sabbath observance. This would be

accomplished through moral suasion or, failing that, by force of law. The AHMS encouraged the in-migration of New Englanders – in its view, the exemplars of the highest possible virtue – in the hope of replicating the New England way of life in Missouri.

The AHMS long sought to avoid the issue of slavery for fear of alienating Southerners. While most of its Missouri missionaries were northern, anti-slavery clergymen, they also tended to avoid the issue for fear of offending their congregants. In December 1856, pressure from northern donors forced the AHMS to begin withholding financial support from churches with slaveholding members. This led to a rupture in relations between the AHMS and its Missouri auxiliary and to the AHMS discontinuing mission work there during the late 1850s. When it returned in the early part of the Civil War, the AHMS, and its newly recruited missionaries, were overtly abolitionist.

The traditional animosity in Missouri toward Congregationalism as northern and abolitionist caused the AHMS to conduct its pre-war mission work through New School Presbyterian churches. In 1861, the New School Presbyterians withdrew from the AHMS and it became a solely Congregationalist society. As the Civil War ended, the AHMS devoted considerable effort to establishing Congregationalism in Missouri. However, competition from, among others, the Methodists and Baptists, and the unwillingness of foreign immigrants to abandon their Catholicism, largely prevented long-term success.

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Introduction

In August, 1855, Frederick Douglass interviewed Rev. Frederick Starr, a former American Home Missionary Society (AHMS) missionary in Missouri who later became an anti-slavery activist in pre-war Kansas. Douglas asked Rev. Starr his view of the likely effect of the recently enacted Kansas-Nebraska Act. Approximately a year old, the act, in effect, repealed the Missouri Compromise. Rather than barring slavery in the territories north of the 36 degree, 30 minute parallel, it instead provided for "popular sovereignty" on the issue. Each territory would decide for itself, through election, whether to enter the Union as a free or slave state.[1]

The act was deeply unpopular in the North. The religious press and anti-slavery members of Congress vociferously objected to it. Many northern clergy joined in the harsh condemnation. Over 3,050 New England ministers signed petitions opposing it. As the act's opponents predicted, its enactment set off ideologically-motivated emigration to Kansas. [2]

In Rev. Starr's view, however, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act actually represented a pro-slavery "blunder." It opened the door for the introduction of freedom into Missouri and the southwestern states. Pro-slavery advocates now recognized their mistake and conflict had become inevitable. "[T]here is no way of maintaining slavery in Missouri but by forcing it upon Kansas. And on the other side…the defense of freedom in Kansas [depends] upon the liberation of Missouri." As a result, anti-slavery forces

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[1] *Frederic Douglas' Paper*, "Policy of Restoring the Missouri Compromise." (Rochester, New York, 1855), 1; Gunja Sengupta, *For God and Mammon: Evangelicals and Entrepreneurs, Masters and Slaves in Territorial Kansas, 1854-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1966), 30, 34.

[2] Donald Wendell Holter, "The Beginnings of Protestantism in Trans-Missouri" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1934), 52; William Warren Sweet, "Some Religious Aspects of the Kansas Struggle", *The Journal of Religion*, 7, no. 5/6 (1927), 582; Victor B. Howard, *Conscience and Slavery: The Evangelistic Calvinist Domestic Missions, 1837-1861* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1990), 132-143.

should not only focus on Kansas but should "make it aggressive" on both sides of the border. "A Yankee emigration in Missouri would, perhaps, be quite as effective as one into Kansas."

Rev. Starr wasn't alone in seeing abolitionist control of Missouri as critical. The AHMS had long recognized this and not simply as it related to slavery. The West was growing exponentially in population. Immigrants were arriving daily from Europe and in-migrants from the eastern and southern states. Political power was shifting westward. In order to spread true religion and, thereby, secure the American republic, the AHMS knew it must first secure control of the West.

The AHMS saw Missouri as the lynchpin for this control. It was strategically situated at the confluence of major arteries of American commerce. The Mississippi River flanked Missouri on its eastern edge and provided transportation of people and goods north to south. The Missouri River along with existing and future railroads transported people and goods east to west. Missouri was blessed with an abundance of productive farmland and the necessary mineral resources to support a robust manufacturing sector.

Protestant Christianity dominated American public life during the antebellum period. In 1860, ninety-five percent of American churches were Protestant. They owned property aggregating approximately $169 million in value, with only the railroads having greater capital investment. The Calvinist denominations, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, in turn, dominated establishment Protestantism. Congregational and Presbyterian clergy – unlike those of the Baptists and Methodists – were well educated, often college and seminary trained. They occupied influential positions in American institutions including universities, benevolent societies and the religious press. Of the approximately fifty-four oldest American colleges, fifty-one were presided over by

clergy. Of these, forty were either Congregationalist or Presbyterian. The Congregationalists and Presbyterians were the most influential Protestants of the period. Indeed, to many historians, their views have often stood in as the "official" Protestant voice of the time. [3]

The 1820s witnessed the proliferation of voluntary societies organized to spread the Gospel and promote moral reform. Many of these societies, founded by Protestant denominations and financially supported by prominent businessmen, grew to become national in scope. The earliest societies promoted mission work, both domestic and foreign, and distributed Bibles and religious tracts. Later, societies were organized to address special-purpose concerns including intemperance, prisons, seamen, conversion of the Jews, colonization of free blacks, Sabbath observance and abolition.

The AHMS represented America's most important general-purpose, home missionary society. The Congregationalists and the Presbyterians organized it and were its chief supporters. Its officers and directors often served in leadership capacities in other societies within the "benevolent empire," thereby creating an interlocking network of relationships. These societies were largely apolitical. However, given the importance of their supporters, both denominational and individual, they commanded great deference from politicians. During the antebellum period, the AHMS possessed an outsized voice in American public life. [4]

Article 2 of the AHMS constitution provided that the society's "great object" was to send the Gospel to the destitute within the United States. In practice, this meant

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[3] Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5; Michael Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin: The Evangelical Birth of the American Social Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 57, 72-74.

[4] Colin Brummitt Goodykoontz, *Home Missions on the American Frontier: With Particular Reference to the American Home Missionary Society* (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), 173; Howard, *Conscience and Slavery*, 5, 9; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin*, 49, 54, 68.

spreading Calvinism westward with the frontier. To do so, as in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-9, the AHMS needed to prepare the right ground, that is, to create the right religious and cultural conditions. To the extent possible, it would replicate New England in Missouri with its compact villages and thrifty farmers and mechanics. It would divert native Missourians and in-migrants from the East and South from enthusiastic religion and foreign immigrants from the errors of Catholicism and rationalism. It would induce everyone to practice correct morals, including temperance and Sabbath observance. Hopefully, it could accomplish this by changing hearts. Failing that, correct moral practice must be imposed by force of law. [5]

In its November 1857 *Home Missionary*, the AHMS noted that, during the apostolic age, God had left the work of propagating the faith in Jewish hands. Now, in the modern, Christian age, he had committed this work to the American people. To expand the republic, three elements were required: the Christian family, the self-reliant laborer, and an American public spirit. The AHMS believed that these traits could be summarized simply as "the religious system of our Puritan fathers…*So far as that religious system prevails, so far will this American people retain their power of expanding themselves over the earth*." The AHMS saw itself as critical in establishing these necessary elements.[6]

Given the imperative of spreading true religion throughout the country, the AHMS hesitated in addressing slavery. While publicly condemning it as a great evil, it refrained from taking action that might drive away southerners. Rather, it argued that moral suasion, and the working of time, would eliminate slavery. Only under donor

[5] For a discussion of the New England sense of cultural superiority and perceived need to impose its values on the West, see generally, Richard Lyle Power, "A Crusade to Extend Yankee Culture, 1820-1865," *New England Quarterly* 13 (December 1940): 638 et seq.

[6] November 1857 *Home Missionary,* 165, 169, American Home Missionary Society records, Amistad Research Center at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.

pressure did it change this position. In December, 1856, the AHMS began withholding financial support from churches containing slaveholding members. Most of its Missouri missionaries were northern, antislavery clergymen. Nevertheless, most of them objected to the new policy, primarily fearing the loss of AHMS funding. This opposition led to a break in relations between the AHMS and its Missouri auxiliary and the AHMS departure from mission work there in the late 1850s.

In 1861, New School Presbyterians withdrew from the AHMS. Thereafter, it became a primarily Congregationalist enterprise. During the war and thereafter, it expended considerable effort in Missouri seeking to establish Congregationalist Churches. Given the greater religious affinity of Missourians toward the rapidly growing Baptists and Methodists and the unwillingness of arriving foreign immigrants to give up Catholicism and rationalism, this effort largely failed.

AHMS missionaries were the foot soldiers in the struggle to secure Missouri and, thereby, the West. They ventured forth motivated by a revised Calvinism. It rejected the idea that, because God had already chosen an elect to be saved, humans could play no role in salvation. Calvinist "New England Theology" now endorsed human agency in salvation and embraced mission work as a means of saving souls. This caused AHMS missionaries to move from their eastern homes, and from friends and family, in order to establish churches in difficult circumstances on the frontier among sometimes indifferent and hostile people.

For several decades, in return for modest salaries, AHMS missionaries – and their families – risked their lives in order to spread Calvinism in Missouri and the West. They experienced hardship, discouragement, sickness and death. They were often courageous and self-sacrificing. In combating perceived error and sinfulness, however, they were

also, at times, rigid and intolerant. They possessed a wide range of human virtue and vice.

Theology Underpinning the "Benevolent Empire"

In December, 1855, Boonville, Missouri pastor John Wettle, had a dispute with a prominent member of his church. The man had given a large share of the cost to construct the new church and annually contributed a substantial portion of Rev. Wettle's salary. However, in a fit of ill humor, the man declared that he would stop making such contributions by year's end. And that's what happened. At the appointed time for the man to discontinue contributions, "he was stopped himself." After a short illness, "he was a corpse!" To Rev. Wettle, this was a "striking example of God's glorious righteousness." Indeed, "it was an example that had a good effect even on some most infidel men." [7]

To Rev. Wettle, the world was not random. Nothing happened by chance. Rather, a providential God – the world's creator and its ongoing, animating force – had devised a detailed plan for its future course. As stated in the 1647 Westminster Confession of Faith, "God, from all eternity, did…ordain whatsoever comes to pass." [8]

God usually implemented his plan through ordinary providence, that is, natural law as reflected in the customary workings of cause and effect. Sometimes, however, in order to issue a warning, teach a lesson or punish wrongdoers, God might reveal his hand in events. He did this through the exercise of "special providence." Early Puritans had seen such warnings in extraordinary celestial signs, such as comets. Mid-nineteenth century Americans – including Abraham Lincoln himself – saw God's hand in events, most compellingly in the Civil War. To many, including Lincoln, the war represented God's punishment of America for the sin of slavery.[9]

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[7] Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," December 10, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1298).

[8] *Westminster Confession of Faith,* Chapter III – Of God's Eternal Decree.

[9] Lincoln's view of the Civil War as providential is reflected in his second inaugural address. There, he noted that, while both North and South invoked God's aid against the other, "[t]he Almighty has his own

For the AHMS missionary, seeking to spread the Gospel in the difficult circumstances of the frontier, it was, no doubt, comforting to know that you were implementing God's plan. To Rev. Wettle, his dispute might represent only a small element of God's plan; nevertheless, it clearly reflected His active involvement.[10]

For nineteenth-century Americans, religious belief often motivated conduct. Religion wasn't a matter for consideration only on Sunday mornings. For decades, religious beliefs motivated AHMS missionaries, and their families, to move to the frontier in order to spread the Gospel. There, they endured hardship, sickness and, not infrequently, premature death, in return for a modest salary. Over time, changes in theology resulted in larger changes in society. This was certainly true with regard to the changes in doctrine that led the principal Calvinist denominations, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, to adopt an activist social perspective and to form the voluntary societies that came to be known as the "benevolent empire."

In the eighteenth century, American Calvinists did not hold a particularly strong missionary spirit. This changed in the early nineteenth century as the consequence of a revised Calvinism. Important doctrines – those relating to the timing of the Millennium, human agency in salvation and Christian virtue – all experienced change. It was the confluence of these changes in doctrine that motivated Calvinists to create voluntary, benevolent societies in the early nineteenth-century.

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purposes." Lincoln expressed his belief that God intended the war to end slavery which "having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove." The war's high cost was recompense for "the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil". Now, "every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."

[10] Rev. Wettle should, perhaps, have noted Increase Mather's warning about the human tendency to read "illustrative providences" in a self-serving way. As Mather noted, "men are exceedingly apt to interpret such things in a way of favour to themselves." The ancient Hebrews provided an example. In the year previous to Jerusalem's destruction at the hands of the Romans, the night skies had revealed "a Blazing Starre in the shape of a sword over the City." Oddly, the ancient Hebrews interpreted this ominous warning – this veritable "sword of Damocles" – as constituting a good omen. Increase Mather, *Heavens Alarm to the World* (Samuel Sewall, printer, 1682), "To the Reader," (h).

The Book of Revelation (20:1-6) foretold of a Millennium, a thousand year stage of human development, during which humanity would experience a reign of peace. During this time, Satan would be bound and cast into an abyss, thereby unable to create trouble. Clearly, the Millennium represented an important stage of God's unfolding plan. However, there was no universal agreement on exactly when it would take place. Would it be before or after Christ's Second Coming and the attendant Final Judgment? Eighteenth-century Calvinists generally expected the Second Coming to take place before the Millennium and were, thus, "premillennialist". Their premillennialism tended to cause them to disengage from society and lead pious lives while awaiting the cataclysms that would accompany the end times.

In the nineteenth-century, a changed interpretation of the Book of Revelation led Calvinists generally to become "postmillennialist". They now expected the Second Coming to take place after the Millennium. This brought about a profound change in expectations. During the Millennium, God would have the opportunity to prepare humanity for the Second Coming. The Final Judgment would not take place until humanity was so prepared. Clearly, God could bring about the Millennium on his own but, chose to do so through humans, primarily Americans. Postmillennialists, thus, became reformers and engaged with society in an effort to assist in these preparations. They founded voluntary societies in order to spread the Gospel, eliminate sinfulness and create the correct conditions for the Millennium.

Other theological changes buttressed Calvinist support for benevolent societies. Calvinists had traditionally believed that, at the beginning of time, God chose certain people – an elect – to be saved. As stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith, "[b]y the decree of God … some men … are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death." This had been "unchangeably designed…before the

foundation of the world was laid." Because God had already decided who was to be saved, humans had no role to play. This struck many as a hard doctrine but, to Calvinists, it had to be remembered that God was sovereign. Humans were in no position to question him.[11]

Sensitive to criticism that Calvinism negated free will, in the eighteenth-century, theologian Jonathan Edwards modified the doctrine of election in what became known as the "New England Theology" or "New Divinity." In it, Rev. Edwards drew a distinction between the inherent natural ability of humans and their inherent moral inability. All humans had the natural ability to choose either to follow or reject God's law. Given their inherent, wicked disposition, however, humans lacked the moral ability to choose the correct path. Given their natural ability, however, their incapacitating moral inability provided no excuse for their sinfulness. Humans could – upon being made aware of their sinfulness – in a flood of existential angst, seek, and obtain, divine intervention. God could intervene, overcoming their moral inability and, thereby, change their hearts. For the first time in Calvinism, everyone now had agency in his or her own salvation. Importantly, through preaching and revival, AHMS missionaries now had a role to play as well.

In another change in theological emphasis, New England Theology focused on "disinterested benevolence" as the essential Christian virtue. To demonstrate love of God, humans needed to act toward their fellows with a benevolence untainted by self-interest. The reverse of disinterested benevolence, that is, self-interested conduct, represented sinfulness. The imperative to practice disinterested benevolence, as the essential Christian virtue, led the adherents of New England Theology to found, and

[11] *Westminster Confession of Faith*, Article III, Sections *iii, iv and v.*

actively support, the voluntary societies created to reform society. Indeed, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the idea of disinterested benevolence led New England theologians Samuel Hopkins and Jonathan Edwards, Jr. to be among the first to criticize slavery.[12]

Collectively, these theological changes created an optimistic Calvinism appropriate for an optimistic age. It was the time of the Second Great Awakening during which the Protestant denominations grew rapidly. From 1800 to 1830, the Methodists increased their membership sevenfold, the Presbyterians quadrupled theirs, the Baptists tripled theirs and the Congregationalists doubled theirs. Also during this period, America underwent rapid geographic and industrial expansion. It undertook large infrastructure projects, including railroads, canals and telegraph lines. These were seen by the Calvinist denominations, the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, as part of God's unfolding plan. In it, an exemplary America would serve as a model for the world. Indeed, in some measure, the idea of Manifest Destiny represented the belief that, as part of a divine plan, the United States was to bring Protestant civilization to the world. [13]

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[12] John R. McKivigan, *The War Against Proslavery Religion: Abolitionism and the Northern Churches, 1830-1865* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 19, 20; Douglas A. Sweeney and Allen C. Guelzo, eds., *The New England Theology From Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2006), 15-21, 70, 71, 91, 92, 118, 119, 151, 157; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions*, 82, 112, 271, 272; Charles T. Thrift, Jr. *The Operations of the American Home Missionary Society in the South, 1826-1861* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1936), 135, 136; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 63-65.

[13] McKivigan, *War against Proslavery Religion,* 24; James H. Moorhead, "Between Progress and Apocalypse: A Reassessment of Millennialism in American Religious Thought, 1800-1880," *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 3 (1984): 525-530.

AHMS Origins and the West as its Focus.

In January 1825, a group of Andover Theological seminarians rode together in a stage-coach to Newbury, Massachusetts, to attend the funeral of the wife of an Andover founder. During the trip, the conversation turned to the need to expand home missions to make them adequate to the nations' rapid growth. The idea of a national society flashed into the mind of one of the seminarians. This excited "very earnest and animated" conversation which occupied the rest of the trip. A few weeks later, one of the seminarians gave a declamation in chapel in which he advocated such a society. It would be a system, not of itinerant missionaries such as utilized by the Methodists, but settled pastors and would be aimed at "planting in every little community …men of learning and influence, to impress their own character on those communities." [14]

In the early nineteenth century, Calvinism began to split into separate strains. In Boston, upper-crust Calvinists embraced Enlightenment thought and Unitarianism and eventually took control of Harvard. The "Old Calvinists" continued as hold-outs in New England maintaining orthodoxy until they disappeared in the mid-nineteenth century. The adherents of the New England Theology embraced mission and benevolent work and expanded west with the frontier. They founded Andover Theological Seminary in 1808 to be a center of New England Theology. From the outset, its graduates were active in benevolent societies.[15]

From the initial germ, planted by the young Andover seminarians, the idea grew. At a meeting in January 1826 in Boston, a committee, comprised of the "most eminent ministers in New England, for wisdom, station and influence," met and determined to

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[14] November 1860 *Home Missionary,* 157 et seq.

[15] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 173-179; Robert H. Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling: American Reform and the Religious Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 34; Sweeny and Guelzo, *New England Theology,* 17, 18.

form a national society. In New York, on May 10, 1826, delegates of the Congregational, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed and Associate Reformed Churches formed the AHMS and approved its constitution. It provided that the society's "great object" would be to assist churches that were unable to support themselves. The AHMS executive committee was empowered to appoint missionaries designate their field of labor and fund their work.[16]

The AHMS had antecedent organizations. Early on, Connecticut had formed the center of missionary interest. There, Congregationalists experimented with sending out pastors on short tours to near-by frontiers, Vermont and New York being primary destinations. In order to formalize this process, in 1798, the Missionary Society of Connecticut was organized. Initially, missionary societies were organized on a local or state basis. By 1814, there were at least fifty Bible societies in the United States. The AHMS was formed out of predecessor societies that were, in turn, organized from local societies.[17]

Congregationalists dominated New England. In their view, they were Puritan and practiced the purest form of Christianity. At this time, New England was still ethnically homogeneous. Congregationalism occupied a primary place in the community. Often, it was the only church in town and its members included important local families. In the early nineteenth-century, in proportion to its size, New England provided more missionaries, and the funds to support them, than any other region in the country.

The Presbyterian stronghold was historically in the Mid-Atlantic region. There, intermarriage among English, Scots-Irish, Dutch and Germans had produced a less ethnically homogeneous population. The Calvinists in these states included the Presbyterians, the Dutch Reformed, German Reformed and the Associate Reformed

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[16] November 1860 *Home Missionary,* 156 et seq.; 1832 AHMS Annual Report, 7.
[17] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 111, 173, 174.

churches. While the Congregationalists remained largely confined to New England, the Presbyterians spread into the West and the South. They began organized work in Missouri three years before statehood and formed the Synod of Missouri in 1832.[18]

Cooperation between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians in western mission work also pre-dated the AHMS. In 1801, the Congregationalist General Association of Connecticut and the Presbyterian General Assembly agreed on a Plan of Union. The Plan allowed the two denominations to put aside their differences on church polity – Congregational Churches each being individually self-governing while Presbyterian Churches were organized into a hierarchy of presbyteries and synods with a national, governing General Assembly – and commit to common mission work. This was intended to promote the harmonious growth of the two denominations as they moved west. New churches in unsettled areas could take one of three possible forms: entirely Presbyterian, entirely Congregationalist or a hybrid of both. Ministers of both denominations were enjoined to work together. Ministers of either denomination could serve in new churches of the other denomination.

At the time, it was commonly supposed by many in New England that the lightly settled frontier did not constitute a hospitable environment for Congregationalism which had prospered in tightly clustered New England communities. Rather, Congregationalists felt that, in order to establish religion on the frontier, a stronger national organization was needed. Consequently, as Calvinism spread westward in the early nineteenth-century, the Plan of Union tended to favor the Presbyterians over Congregationalists. Given the interdenominational rivalry common for the period, in giving deference to Presbyterian interests in AHMS mission efforts, the Congregationalists exhibited an odd complacency.

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[18] Ibid., 15, 16, 29; Holter, *Beginnings of Protestantism*, 44,45.

As Congregationalists – and their ministers – moved west or south, they customarily affiliated with Presbyterian Churches. For this reason, and also because of pro-slavery hostility toward Congregationalism as an abolitionist denomination, Congregationalism failed to take hold in Missouri prior to the Civil War.[19]

As it grew, the AHMS continued its missions in the settled regions in the East. However, its primary focus was the western frontier. Eastern donors contributed greater amounts than needed to fund eastern operations thereby subsidizing "feeble" churches in the West. Because, in the AHMS view, slavery represented an impediment, or "hindrance," to the spread of the Gospel, it focused on work in the West rather than the South. For administrative purposes, the AHMS grouped Missouri together with Illinois rather than the South, notwithstanding the fact that Missouri was a slave state. In AHMS annual reports, it was always listed together with the western states and territories. Within Missouri, the AHMS concentrated its efforts largely in the northern part of the state where it viewed the presence of slavery to be more limited. [20]

To the AHMS, the West was an open field to be filled by those denominations that acted most decisively. This fact wasn't lost on Catholics. As the AHMS noted, already, "an army of ecclesiastics is poured in to gain … this fair possession for the Antichrist." "Missouri …the very *heart* of the West is infected, and through its great natural arteries, every pulsation throws abroad a stream of influence, baneful to civil freedom and religious well-being." St. Louis University alone was under the care of six foreign priests "as a moment's inspection of their names will suggest." To the AHMS, Catholic interest in American law and institutions was only preliminary to subverting

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[19] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 149-151, 252, 253, 415; Holter, *Beginnings of Protestantism,* 45-48; Howard, *Conscience and Slavery,* 4; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 65, 66.
[20] 1833 AHMS Annual Report, 12; 1854 AHMS Annual Report, 83; Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 13.

them. Its investment in education was simply a means to lure Protestant parents to enroll their children thereby allowing them to be converted. By these means, unless stopped, Catholics would gain control of the republic.[21]

Although these dire warnings were no doubt motivated, in some measure, in order to promote fund raising, fear of Catholic domination was genuinely felt. Prominent New Englanders including Rev. Jedidiah Morse, his son Samuel F.B. Morse and Lyman Beecher all repeatedly warned of Catholic conspiracies to gain control of Mississippi Valley and, thence, the United States. Nativists looked with fear on the colonizing efforts of the *Giesener Auswanderungs Gesellschaft*, formed in 1833 to promote German immigration to Missouri. Foreign motives were obvious. The 1848 revolutions had made clear to European despots the need to subvert the American republic so that it could no longer provide inspiration for future democratic revolutions in Europe. [22]

Census data showed that the American population was growing fastest in the West. Consequently, political power was shifting westward. It was critical to provide the necessary moral training to those who would constitute a future majority in Congress. To prevent the West's loss to Catholicism and irreligion, voluntary societies needed to send missionaries, Sabbath School teachers, Bibles, religious tracts and pious families. Time was short and the stakes were high. As AHMS editors asked in the December *Home Missionary*: "[s]hall the republic be preserved?" "Shall this …be a land of Gospel light, when it shall number its three hundred or five hundred millions? These are questions of fearful import." [23]

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[21] May 1842 AHMS Annual Report, 78, 79, 97-99; December 1853 *Home Missionary,* 181, 183.
[22] Ray A. Billington, "Anti-Catholic Propaganda and the Home Missionary Movement, 1800-1860," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 22, no. 3 (1935): 363-370.
[23] 1843 AHMS Annual Report, 102-104; December 1853 *Home Missionary,* 16, 182, 183; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 169-171.

The diverse nature of target groups made the AHMS' task difficult. In its 1857 Annual Report, the AHMS noted that the West included European immigrants, southerners, Catholics, rationalists, all manner of Protestants, come-outers and Mormons. These groups were not only diverse, they were discordant. There were Irish "ignorant, bigoted, full of suspicions, jealousies, and hostilities" and under the "subjection" of priests. There were Germans, perhaps, more formidable due to their "greater intelligence," the majority of whom were either Romanists or unbelievers. There were white southerners, the victims of slavery who, nevertheless, were suspicious of "Yankee" preachers and who preferred "heart religion" delivered amongst "ecstatic groans and convulsions" over reasoned preaching. Finally, there were radicals and come-outers. They had "learned many things but nothing rightly." They were high-minded, full of debate, ever learning but never coming to knowledge of the truth. Missouri contained all of these diverse and discordant groups but also had the added element of slavery.[24]

Through the Plan of Union, the Presbyterian Church absorbed Congregationalist ministers as it moved westward. Many of these Congregationalist ministers were influenced by New England Theology with its missionary spirit. They influenced elements within the Presbyterian Church; indeed, the terms "New School men" and "Missionary Society men" often came to be used synonymously. To Presbyterian conservatives, missionary work should be done through agencies of the church, subject to church discipline, rather than outside societies.

At the June, 1837, meeting of the Presbyterian General Assembly, tensions came to a head. Controlled by conservatives, the General Assembly passed a resolution directing the AHMS to discontinue activities within the Presbyterian Church. In reaction,

[24] 1857 AHMS Annual Report, 118; May 1856 *Home Missionary,* 1-5.

pro-missionary elements of the General Assembly formed a rump group that developed into New School Presbyterianism. Shortly thereafter, the Old School and New School factions parted company. One of the New School's earliest actions was to rescind the resolution severing connection with the AHMS. The New School did not create an agency for home missions, but instead worked exclusively through the AHMS. In effect, the AHMS became the New School's home missionary agency. [25]

The 1837 schism between Old School and New School factions did not initially manifest itself in Missouri. There churches initially refused to affiliate with either school. By 1840, however, the division came to Missouri. Missouri courts gave church records and property to the Old School branch. Since it did not support the AHMS, thereafter, in Missouri, as elsewhere, AHMS aid went exclusively to New School churches. By 1840, AHMS activities in Missouri, in effect, were conducted through New School churches. [26]

At its founding, the AHMS gave itself a large task. It would secure the West for an expanded American republic and protect it from the threat posed by Catholicism and its secular companion, despotism. It would save America from irreligion and would establish the right conditions for the millennium. It would accomplish all of this by sending out dedicated missionaries. In the decades that followed, these goals proved difficult to achieve. In pursuing them, however, AHMS missionaries, and their families, endured hard lives.

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[25] Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 80-82, 137, 138, 260; Sweeny and Guelzo, *New England Theology,* 22, 219; Howard, *Conscience and Slavery,* 152; Clifford S. Griffin. "Cooperation and Conflict: The Schism in the American Home Missionary Society, 1837-1861" *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 38, no. 4 (1960): 214; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 65, 118.
[26] Holter, "Beginnings of Protestantism," 45, 47.

Missionary Life in Missouri

AHMS missionaries in antebellum Missouri encountered primitive conditions. Housing was scarce and expensive. Suitable facilities for church services were often unavailable. What was available was usually poorly insulated and uncomfortable. Missionaries were often required to rent meeting halls or schools in order to conduct services. Sometimes, different denominations would jointly build a facility, a "union meeting house," and rotate its use.

The AHMS typically granted its missionaries an annual commission. They had no legal expectation that the commission would be renewed. They were subject to dismissal by their congregation for any reason or no reason. The AHMS made no provision for missionary retirement and, given their small salary, missionaries had little means to save for it. There was no financial safety net. The missionary and his family were subject to possible illness. An early death claimed many.

Often, as missionaries formed churches, they found insufficient potential members in any one location to support a church financially, even with AHMS assistance. Consequently, they often organized multiple churches in different locations and tried to meet each church's needs as best they could. Usually, this meant traveling long distances on Sundays, often in inclement weather.

AHMS missionaries were typically "eastern men." As Congregationalist and Presbyterian ministers, they were typically well-educated, often university and seminary trained. They held sober, dignified services. Their conversions were customarily made over a period of time in consultation with their pastor and much soul searching. It was understood that for a conversion to be lasting, it should grow out of reasoned preaching and quiet consideration. Both the Congregationalists and Presbyterians looked down on

the Baptists' and Methodists' uneducated clergy, their emotional services and hastily-considered conversions.

AHMS missionaries in Missouri competed for converts in a religiously diverse marketplace. It contained Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, Unitarians, Lutherans, Catholics and others. The Baptists and Methodists were growing particularly fast. They both utilized successful strategies for gaining adherents. The Methodists employed a system of circuit-riding, itinerant ministers. The Baptists relied on self-supporting ministers, often farmers, who worked with their hands during the week and preached on Sundays. Neither denomination used an educated clergy. They instead relied on preachers who had responded to a "call" to preach. [27]

All Protestant denominations used revivals as a means to attract members. However, Baptist and Methodist revivals differed greatly from those of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians. The Baptists and Methodists used large scale, emotional revivals, often at "camp meetings," which produced large numbers of immediate conversions. The Congregationalists and Presbyterians denied the legitimacy of such revivals. They preferred small scale revivals conducted with decorum, with no boisterous outcries and where people behaved in a rational way. To the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, the very absence of enthusiasm was a mark of a revival's authenticity.[28]

In the 1850s, approximately seventy five percent of Missourians were of southern ancestry with many of the remaining coming from portions of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois previously settled by southerners. They were largely uneducated, poor yeoman farmers.

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[27] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 182; Thrift, "Operations of the American Home Missionary Society," 2, 3, 219; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 51.
[28] Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 101-103.

To the Baptists and Methodists, they represented a natural constituency. In some measure, their popularity reflected a Jacksonian antipathy to Calvinism as the religion of the moneyed East. The doctrine of election well suited the Calvinist sense of superiority. On the frontier, however, many preferred a simpler, more democratic Christianity, one that gave full effect to free will in salvation. [29]

To AHMS missionaries, however, other denominations were guilty of error. Consequently, an area might already be amply served by preachers of other denominations but, without AHMS presence, it was to be considered "utterly destitute" of religion. This contempt of other denominations can be seen in the views of Bolivar, Missouri, missionary A.G. Taylor. To him, neighboring Baptist preachers were ignorant. "[T]hey tell their experiences and some touching story to…get up the crying and shouting…The result of such preaching is not calculated to elevate the standard of piety but to sink the whole of their hearers down to a level with themselves…These men glory in denouncing studied…& learned preachers. But if they can get a bible…in their hand…then they go ahead without ever stopping to look to see if it is right or wrong." [30]

To AHMS missionaries, "Anti-mission" or "Hard-shell" Baptists, with their opposition to benevolent societies, represented particular ignorance. Baptists contained elements of both Arminianism and Calvinism. Anti-mission Baptists, however, perhaps to distinguish themselves from their rivals, the Methodists, who were resolutely Arminian, embraced an extreme Calvinism. They viewed mission work as unscriptural. God had already chosen an elect to be saved. It would be presumptuous – indeed impious – to seek save those whom God had not chosen to do so.

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[29] Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xvii, 5; Thrift, "Operations of the American Home Missionary Society," 5-7, 258; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 182.

[30] Taylor to Milton Badger, May 1, 1855 (Reel 157, Image 1269 et seq.).

Less extreme Anti-missionists often viewed missionary efforts as proper only if they were conducted in conformance with the simple means described in the Bible. This excluded the publication of religious tracts which usurped the function of the Bible. It also precluded Sunday Schools which were based on the heretical notion that conversion could flow from impressions made on young minds.[31]

AHMS missionaries, imbued with the new theology, viewed Anti-missionists as anathema. Troy, Missouri missionary, Rev. E. P. Noel, was typical. His neighboring "hard-shell" Baptist preacher was clearly a man of wide influence. Sadly, he utilized this influence to oppose "everything good" including temperance and Sabbath schools. He also had many "bitter things" to say about religious tracts and the "awful business" they contained. He would burn them all if he could. In Rev. Noel's view, the Baptist preacher was, thus, a "large influence for evil." At bottom, his error stemmed from his belief that the "sinner could have no agency in his own salvation." Worse – from the standpoint of mission work – neither could the missionary.[32]

Despite denominational differences, local churches were sometimes able to work together on common goals. The shortage of suitable church facilities represented a chronic problem. Sometimes, local congregations could alleviate this by jointly constructing a union meeting house which they would then use on a rotating basis. More often, however, local congregations bickered. LaGrange, Missouri, pastor W. W. Whipple lamented this lack of comity. To him, it was a curious fact that denominations that were closest in doctrine often were farthest apart in "sentiments of cordiality & mutual respect." New School pastor William Porter agreed. The theological differences

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[31] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 85, 201, 202, 258; Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 236; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "The Antimission Movement in the Jacksonian South: A Study in Regional Folk Culture," *The Journal of Southern History* 36, no. 4 (1970): 502, 509, 511, 512.
[32] Noel to Badger, October 6, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 888 et seq.).

between Old School and New School Presbyterians were about the same as that between "tweedledum and tweedledee." Nevertheless, in St. Francisville, Missouri, the two groups couldn't cooperate. Consequently, Rev. Porter was unable to secure a congregation and was forced to seek a position elsewhere. [33]

Rev. Timothy Hill was a New School Presbyterian minister and arrived in Missouri in September 1845, freshly graduated from seminary. He had grown up in Mason, New Hampshire where his father was pastor of the local Presbyterian Church. He was recruited to serve in Missouri by Rev. Artemus Bullard, the Corresponding Secretary of the Missouri Home Missionary Society (Missouri HMS), the local AHMS auxiliary. In doing so, he joined a group of other recent seminary graduates who called themselves the "Missouri Ten." He left New York on October 7, 1845 and, after a long trip by rail, canal boat and steamer, arrived in St. Louis on October 25, 1845.[34]

To Rev. Hill, nearly all possible conflicting social groups were to be found in Missouri. There were hardy pioneers, educated and polished easterners, all classes of foreigners, slave holders and "warmly earnest haters of slavery." This diversity made it difficult to bring "the terrors of God before their conscience." However, Rev. Hill quickly recognized that Missouri, with abundant mineral resources and fertile soil, gave it great future importance.[35]

Rev. Hill initially served in northeastern Missouri. In 1852, he moved to Bremen, an industrial suburb of St. Louis to serve as pastor of the Fairmont Presbyterian Church. At that time, St. Louis was becoming integrated into the northern economy and

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[33] Whipple to "Secretaries of the A.H.M. Soc.," December 10, 1856 (Reel 156, Image 210 et seq.); Porter to "Secretaries of the A.H.M. Soc.," January 2, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 895 et seq.).

[34] John B. Hill. "A Missionary Enters Missouri: Excerpts from the Diary of Timothy Hill, 1845-1846," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 25, no. 1 (1947): 1 et seq.; John B. Hill. "A Missionary Faces Obstacles: More Extracts from the Diary of Timothy Hill, 1851-1860" *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 25, no. 3 (1947): 177, 182.

[35] Hill to Badger, April 23, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1112 et seq.).

dependent on northern capital. It was the hub of industry and the terminus for all of Missouri's railroads. Approximately sixty percent of its population was foreign-born. By 1860, St. Louis contained approximately 12,000 industrial workers, making it the second largest manufacturing city in the Mississippi Valley behind Cincinnati. [36]

Approximately half of Bremen's 2,500 residents were immigrant Germans. The rest contained large numbers of English, Welsh, Irish and Scots immigrants. A Bremen physician described Bremen as containing a few fine American families accustomed to good society and a few respectable English families. Among these were wealthy Presbyterian families. However, they were Old School Presbyterians and, given the 1837 split between Old School and New School branches, they were unlikely to join an AHMS-sponsored church. Sadly, there were also many Mormons and other "hard cases."[37]

An 1854 AHMS study revealed a salary differential in favor of ministers in self-supporting churches over those in AHMS-supported churches. The AHMS lamented this income differential. It worried that it would lead to a decrease in the number and competence of AHMS missionaries. It might create a system of temporary missionaries who would quickly leave for permanent positions in self-sustaining churches. In the end, however, the AHMS recognized that it could only fund missionaries to the extent that funds were available. It was entirely dependent on contributions. [38]

Churches seeking AHMS aid were required to submit an application to the New York office setting forth such matters as the number of members, average attendance, expected salary and the portion to be paid by the church, nearby denominations and

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[36] Fellman, *Inside War,* 8.
[37] Hill to Badger, June 29, 1852, (Reel 156, Image 96 et seq.).
[38] January 1854 *Home Missionary*, 205-210.

whether the minister would work full-time as pastor or also pursue another occupation. Church elders signed the application and it was attested by two or more local preachers of known standing. It was also subject to review and the recommendation of the local AHMS agent. [39]

The AHMS did not have a large staff. Rather, it relied on three Corresponding Secretaries in its New York office to review applications, handle correspondence and disburse funds. Of necessity, the AHMS relied on local pastors, including the local agent in the state, typically mature ministers with local knowledge and influence, to provide advice.

If approved, AHMS missionaries generally received a one year commission, although sometimes for a shorter duration. In 1850s Missouri, missionary salaries generally ranged from $300 to $500 per year. The most typical salary was around $400 per year. The applicant church usually paid one-fourth of this amount or about $100. The AHMS paid the balance. On request, the AHMS would also arrange, through other societies, for the delivery of clothing for missionaries and their families.[40]

The AHMS expected the missionary to support himself and his family on his salary alone. Its policy did not allow missionaries to engage side pursuits such as farming. Only teaching was allowed and even this was discouraged. This prohibition on outside income sometimes had a perverse effect. It tended to undercut the missionary's moral legitimacy among people on the frontier who were often suspicious of paid preachers.

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[39] Undated AHMS notice regarding applications signed by AHMS secretaries Milton Badger, Charles Hall and David B. Coe (Reel 156, Image 1028).

[40] Undated AHMS notice regarding availability of missionary boxes (Reel 156, Image 1285).

Given their limited salary, missionaries often ignored this prohibition, sometimes with the tacit approval of the AHMS. Rev. A. G. Taylor of Boliver, Missouri freely admitted that he engaged in farming. He did so with the part-time help of his eleven and fifteen year old sons and hired help during harvest. Farming provided over half of his income. Without it, he wouldn't be able to survive. Rev. Taylor was unwilling to ask his congregation for more money. If he did, inevitably, the cry would go up "he is preaching for money and cares more for the fleece than the flock."[41]

In addition to serving as pastor of the Fairmont Presbyterian Church, Rev. Hill also served as the AHMS agent in Missouri, and as the Corresponding Secretary of the Missouri Home Missionary Society. In these positions, he reviewed applications for aid by Missouri churches and provided his recommendation.

For mid-1850s Missouri, Rev. Hill's salary was unusually large. In July, 1856, his Fairmont Presbyterian Church applied to the AHMS for support to enable it to pay a $1,000 salary for Rev. Hill's "self-denying labors." Otherwise, even with the most rigid economy, he would be unable to support his family. The church had only been able to obtain subscriptions from members for $400. The church was, therefore, asking for $600 in aid. Perhaps, in part, because of Rev. Hill's additional responsibilities, the AHMS granted the application but not without controversy.

Rev. Hill understood AHMS reluctance. He admitted that little had been accomplished with earlier aid. Nevertheless, he argued that the cost of living in Bremen, a St. Louis suburb, was equivalent to a salary of $250 to $300 in rural areas. His only option to continued AHMS support would be to abandon missionary work and take a job as pastor of a self-supporting church.

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[41] Taylor to D. B. Coe, August 25, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 967); Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 186, 243; Charles T. Thrift, Jr. "Frontier Missionary Life" *Church History* 6, no. 2 (1937): 114, 118; Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 241, 242.

The low salary and difficulty of frontier life caused many AHMS missionaries to grow despondent. Even the relatively well-paid Rev. Hill was not immune. In October, 1855, he described attendance at his Fairmont Presbyterian Church as "pretty good" and cited new additions to the Sabbath school. Moreover, his congregation was intelligent and attentive. Nevertheless, he felt himself unable to reach his congregation. "I do not know that I have done any good to a living soul, my heart almost sinks within me as I think how long I have toiled here to so little purpose. The way before me is dark….the word I preach seems to find no answering echo in their hearts." [42]

In many cases, the missionary's sense of having failed to convey the Gospel message compounded an already existing sense of social isolation. Missionaries moved far from family and friends in established eastern communities in order to take up their duties in scattered frontier settlements. Gentryville, Missouri, missionary T. Morgan served an area of Missouri containing eleven counties. By his calculation, it was an area larger than Vermont. In 1845, he left the "home of my childhood and the friends of my youth for a region…where friends are few and social comforts fewer still." He now lived alone, having "buried a wife and know[n] the sorrows of widowhood." Given his remoteness, he was unable to engage with fellow ministers in order share experiences and socialize. He had little in common with his neighbors. They were mostly illiterate and subject to all manner of "error, bigotry and sectarian influence." Looking back on the past two years, Rev. Morgan concluded: "that I have labored successfully, I have few witnesses." [43]

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[42] Fairmont Presbyterian Church, Bremen, Missouri, application for support addressed to "Secretaries of the AHMS," July 8, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 69); Hill to D. B. Coe, September 16, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 72); Hill to Badger, October 1, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1124 et seq.); Goodykoonz, *Home Missions,* 182-187.

[43] May 1847 *Home Missionary,* 3, 4.

This sense of isolation could be particularly acute during holidays. At Christmas, 1854, Rev. Samuel Grant paused to reflect on his past five years Missouri. He had recently returned from a reunion in Massachusetts at his alma mater, the Andover Theological Seminary. The trip had given rise to "the strange sensation of pleasure mingled with sadness." He had entered mission work in order to assist in "placing the pillars of our Republic upon the basis of the Gospel of truth." In the course of his work, he had lost his "dear companion" who had "shared my hopes & emotions & for a brief space nobly toiled side by side with me." She had gone on "to a higher sphere of labor" to join the angels and their "infant cherub" who had but briefly "plumed its wings on earth." Rev. Grant remarried and lost his second wife. His multiple losses – two wives and a child – left him greatly saddened. He was again left "to toil on in sadness & solitude, far from my kindred & remote from ministerial brethren." [44]

For missionaries, illness and death were constant threats. Either could devastate a missionary family, emotionally and financially. Missionary income was inadequate under the best circumstances and provided little cushion against adversity. The case of Beaufort, Missouri, pastor Henry Grote is illustrative. Rev. Grote served three German congregations, preaching every Sunday at his principal church and alternating weekly at the other two. While traveling between churches during winter, Rev. Grote frequently became "frozen quite stiff on my horse." During the remaining six days of the week, he taught school.

In 1852, Rev. Grote's wife was ill for almost six months. Rev. Grote became ill as well and was forced to remain in bed for three weeks. Their illnesses resulted in an $80 debt for medical care, a very large sum in rural Missouri. During this time, their

[44] Grant to D. B. Coe, December 20, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 47 et seq.).

clothing also began to wear out. They had received their last clothing donation two years earlier and now asked the AHMS for another. In August, 1853, Rev. Grote died.

Notwithstanding his sacrifices, Rev. Grote's congregation wasn't entirely grateful. Church elders complained that Rev. Grote's part-time farming had caused him to neglect his pastoral duties. A nearby minister was similarly uncharitable. Rarely did churches oppose applications for AHMS support. Here, however, the nearby pastor opposed support for Rev. Grote's successor. He argued that AHMS rules prohibited aid since there were already orthodox churches in the neighborhood. Not content with this argument, however, he went on to question whether Rev. Grote had died happily. In the nearby pastor's view, Rev. Grote had been covetous and had accumulated an estate larger than that of most farmers. Moreover, by the time of Rev. Grote's death, the nearby pastor asserted that Rev. Grote had accumulated a large supply of donated clothing.[45]

Illness and untimely death also devastated Rev. H. C. Werth and his family. Worse, he felt that he had been induced to incur debt through AHMS misrepresentations. Rev. Werth served a German congregation in St. Louis. In 1854, he experienced a lengthy illness which he attributed to fatigue from sleepless nights taking care of his wife during her own lengthy illness. She had grown sick from exhaustion due to trying to make ends meet on Rev. Werth's inadequate salary. During Rev. Werth's illness, he had kept his work schedule but was often "feeble." His physician diagnosed this as due to "excitement" from too much preaching and ordered Rev. Werth to limit his sermons to no more than five per Sunday.

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[45] Translation of letter from Henry Grote to "Dear Sir," January 2, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 47), translation of letter from Henry Grote to "Dear Sir," October 2, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 58 et seq.), Evangelical Congregation on St. John's Creek application for aid, March 30, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 935 et seq.), translation of letter from E. Reidel to "Respected Sirs," January 6, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 929 et seq.).

Rev. Werth's wife died in July, 1854. This deprived him of "the happy society of one who – next to Christ – is for me the best of all human beings." His loss was "deeper than human strength can sustain." His own health declined to the point that he was unable to work. The Missouri HMS determined that it was thus "inexpedient" for the AHMS to continue paying support and asked that it be discontinued. This led to a dispute between Rev. Werth and the AHMS over the unpaid support. The AHMS argued that Rev. Werth had violated the terms of his commission by improperly engaging in farming as a sideline. Rev. Werth protested that financial necessity had required him to do so. His income from preaching only provided about half of his family's needed support.

It wasn't uncommon for missionaries to own farms. However, they were typically small, subsistence enterprises. Usually, they were only large enough be farmed by the missionary with help from his family. Rev. Grote's farm contained forty acres and Rev. Werth's farm contained two hundred fifty five acres. Of course, size alone didn't determine productivity. Farms needed to be cleared in order to be cultivated and, often, farmers had not accomplished this for the entire farm. Sometimes, a congregation would agree to farm a missionary's land and provide him with the resulting crop in lieu of paying him a salary.

Given his precarious finances, Rev. Werth felt that his congregation would have shown "greater mercy" if they had not hired him as their preacher. In the end, because of the time spent preaching, his neglected farm had "grow[n] to a jungle and my house to a wreck." Worse, Rev. Werth believed that the AHMS had wrongfully induced him to borrow money on which to live with the false promise of later repaying him. Now it refused to do so.

In the end, Rev. Werth wondered what he had achieved. He had embarked on missionary work with the high hope of spreading the Gospel among German immigrants. He had endeavored to build his church by going house-to-house in the German neighborhoods of St. Louis. He had traveled "from South to North and from the Mississippi to the West" but was able to "affect nothing of permanency." His church failed and its members scattered in different directions.

Rev. Werth died on August 15, 1855, approximately a year after his wife's death. Rev. Hill, the Missouri AHMS agent, notified the AHMS of Rev. Werth's death. Whether accurately or not – and perhaps out of a simple desire to hope for the best – Rev. Hill concluded Rev. Werth's wife and six children would be well taken care of. "With true German forethought for investing all the money he could…often times at the expense of the convenient comforts of life… his family will have a comfortable support."[46]

AHMS missionaries faced a difficult life in frontier Missouri. They received little income and were largely prohibited by the AHMS from supplementing it with income from outside endeavors. They were subject to sickness and, not infrequently, death. Given competition from the Baptists and Methodists – both proven proselytizers – they often achieved disappointing results. Foreign immigrants proved to be a particular challenge. They were frequently Catholic or rationalist, either of which "error" made them difficult prospects.

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[46] Werth to David Coe, March 1, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1007 et seq.), Werth to Coe, July 1, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1013), Werth to Coe, August 12, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1016), Werth to Coe, October 1, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1018), Hill to David Coe, February 23, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1209), Werth to Badger, March 1, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1279, 1280), Hill to Badger, March 12, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1209); Hill to Badger, August 21, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1123); Carl Edward Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier: A Study in the Rise of Religion among the Germans of the West* (St. Louis: Eden Publishing House, 1939): 173, 174.

AHMS and Foreign Immigrants

To the AHMS, foreign immigration was both a danger and a challenge. It had produced a "frightful influx of infidelity, superstition, intemperance, Sabbath desecration, and other kindred evils." However, the tide of new immigrants was too large to be ignored. The need to form "one great Christian nation" made it critical to bring about their early assimilation. American citizenship and true religion were two sides of the same coin. To Rev. John Wettle, "[n]o matter where a man comes from, if he is a good Christian, he certainly will become a good citizen." [47]

During the 1850s, nativism reached its high-water mark as a political force in nineteenth-century America. The Know-Nothings captured state houses and elected governors. The Republican Party flirted with nativism. The Know-Nothings sought to impose laws restricting immigration and preventing immigrants from voting or office-holding for long periods after becoming naturalized. The AHMS was largely apolitical and didn't advocate a nativist legislative agenda. Rather, it adopted an assimilationist approach. New immigrants should abandon Catholicism and rationalism in favor of "true religion." They should also reject intemperance and Sabbath desecration and embrace the sobriety and hard work. It was hoped that this could be accomplished through moral suasion. Failing that, however, Missouri missionaries favored imposing correct morals by law. [48]

Indeed, rather than rejecting immigration, the AHMS viewed it as providential. God had diverted Catholic colonization of North America by turning the Spanish to the

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[47] June 1854 *Home Missionary,* 43; Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," June 10, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1294); October 1855 *Home Missionary,* 248; February 1857 *Home Missionary,* 229-234; March 1857 *Home Missionary*, 253-258; May 1857 Annual Report, 122-126.

[48] Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995): 226 et seq.; Sengupta, *For God and Mammon,* 93; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,223*-234.

Southwest, Mexico and Latin America. This had allowed Protestantism time to take root and gave America time to prepare for European immigration. It now created an opportunity to convert Catholics who, had they remained in Europe, would have continued to live in bondage to false doctrine and secular tyrannies. In America, immigrants could be taught true religion and liberated from old practice. [49]

Periodic economic troubles drove German immigration. Germans were lured to the United States by large infrastructure projects needing laborers and available, cheap land. Educated professionals, many of them political liberals, also came in order to escape political and religious oppression. During the period from 1830 to 1845, average emigration from Germany to the United States reached 40,000 annually. Missouri became a popular destination. Upon reaching St. Louis, immigrants would settle along the Mississippi River or move west to settle in German communities that sprang up on both sides of the Missouri River. [50]

The AHMS realized that the Germans constituted the largest immigrant group. By its estimate, in the United States, there were approximately two million immigrant Germans or those using German as their principal language. In the 1850 census, German immigrants constituted 8% of Missouri's population. In 1854, the AHMS supported twenty eight missionaries in Missouri. Six of them preached in German and one in French. [51]

The language difference and the German practice of holding on to imported customs made them a particular challenge. Moreover, while earlier German immigrants had primarily been Lutheran or members of the Reformed Churches, more recent arrivals

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[49] Billington, "Anti-Catholic Propaganda", 383; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 233.
[50] Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier,* 3-6, 19-21.
[51] June 1854 *Home Missionary,* 43.

were either Catholic or rationalist. To the AHMS, these represented the opposite ends of religious heresy. As Rev. Hill lamented: "Rationalism and Popery! the extremes of atheistic recklessness & servile superstition blend in dreadful harmony in German Infidelity." The elders of the First Presbyterian Church in St. Joseph, Missouri endorsed this view: "our German population is composed of principally two classes viz: Infidel and Roman Catholic, stubborn material certainly to work with." [52]

In Germany, state-sponsored churches paid clergy salaries, provided compulsory religious education and prescribed religious rites. Given this legacy of government support, German congregations in Missouri often failed to recognize their obligation to provide voluntary support. To the AHMS, this failure did not arise from poverty. Immigrant Germans were generally as prosperous as any rural population. Moreover, they were numerous. Nevertheless, they "signally" refused to obey the injunction in Galatians 6:2 to "bear ye one another's burdens". In 1852, Rev. Henry Grote complained that his German congregation was "unwilling to spare five cents for the welfare of their immortal souls."[53]

The old world religious paternalism generated an anti-clerical backlash. This was particularly so for educated Germans, especially those who emigrated in the aftermath of the 1848 revolutions, the "forty-eighters". Having escaped German state-sponsored religion, they were keen not to see it recreated in the United States. To the AHMS, these educated Germans had fallen under the influence of "the unprincipled teachings of Thomas Paine and similar emissaries of darkness." They were "avowed enemies of the

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[52] May 1857 Annual Report, 122; February 1857 *Home Missionary,* 229-234; Hill to Badger, August 17, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 99, 100); Elders of Presbyterian Church of St. Joseph, Missouri to "Dear Sir" , April 21, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 86).

[53] May 1857 Annual Report, 123, 124; Grote to "Dear Sir", April 2, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 49).

Church, the Bible, the Sabbath, the marriage relation, and all institutions of benevolence and reform." [54]

The boundaries between rationalists and the religious were not rigid and were subject to overlap. Some German churches, influenced by rationalist thinking, employed freelance preachers of a rationalist bent. Often, these churches refused to affiliate with established denominations. Instead, they viewed themselves as independent, evangelical, free churches. Given their rationalist orientation, to the AHMS, their ministers were, in effect, "wolves in sheep's clothing." One such preacher argued in sermons that criminal behavior was simply an expression of human nature struggling for liberty. As such, these individuals shouldn't be morally judged or, indeed, held criminally culpable.[55]

Rationalists often controlled German-language newspapers. Their owners were men who "breath[ed] a spirit of the bitterest hostility to Christianity." One such journal, the *Friend of the Light*, contained "profane and wicked scoffings and revilings" of Christianity. Rev. John Wettle, in 1854, quoted a St. Louis German newspaper as stating "Lord, do not meddle with us, we will take care of ourselves." To Rev. Wettle, these newspapers regularly promulgated doctrines so outrageous that they "would be counted as blasphemy by a Turk." [56]

That year, Missouri experienced a protracted drought which resulted in widespread crop loss and attendant hardship. To Rev. Wettle, the drought conveyed God's message that Germans should discontinue reading infidel newspapers. Instead, they should read only those based on true Christianity and that were consistent with the

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[54] Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier,* 33; June 1853 *Home Missionary,* 54; 1857 Annual Report, 123, 124; January 1857 *Home Missionary,* 229-234.
[55] June 1853 *Home Missionary,* 54; Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier,* 196.
[56] 1857 Annual Report, 123, 124; June 1853 *Home Missionary,* 54; Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," September 10, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1029, 1032).

"free institutions as laid down by the Pilgrim Fathers." He urged a boycott of these newspapers and was greatly heartened when his congregation unanimously pledged to do so. If they followed through, Rev. Wettle confidently expected that God would "again smile upon us with refreshing showers." [57]

Properly viewed, Sabbath breaking and intemperance were not simply individual sins. The Sabbath wasn't just a day for Christian observance. It was an indispensable mechanism for keeping people's minds focused on the divine. Failing to honor the Sabbath could cause irreligion to creep in thereby eroding democratic principles. Intemperance similarly had public consequences. It destroyed the nation's intellect and patriotism. If not confronted, both sins would produce a drunken underclass of irreligious and desperate men with no capital or moral principles. The American Temperance Society was formed in 1826, the same year as the AHMS, to fight this possibility. Until abolition eclipsed all other issues, temperance took pride of place among the special-purpose voluntary societies.[58]

To AHMS missionaries, among Germans, Sabbath breaking and intemperance were twin sins often engaged in simultaneously. St. Louis pastor John Werth encountered German resistance to attending church on Sundays. They had worked all week and wanted to use the Sabbath for recreation. This recreation often involved consuming alcohol. To AHMS missionaries, German Sabbath breaking and intemperance were not simply moral failings. They often manifested a pugnacious attitude toward religion itself. [59]

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[57] Wettle to "Dear Brethren" (Reel 156, Image 1030); see also December 1854 *Home Missionary,* 196, 197 for edited version of Wettle letter.
[58] Abzug, *Cosmos Crumbling,* 86-90, 111; Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 164; Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 76.
[59] Werth to Coe, March 1, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1008).

In the summer of 1852, local Germans opened a dance house, only "a few rods" from Rev. Hill's Fairmont Presbyterian Church in Bremen. There, on Sunday, in open defiance to Christian sensibilities, omnibuses discharged large numbers of people. About 3:00 p.m., they "commenced their orgies … dancing, drinking, whooping, yelling…for many hours." The disheartened Rev. Hill asked rhetorically: "A land without a Sabbath! Can there be anything worse?" His thoughts turned to descriptions he had heard of mission work in India and of idolatrous worship there accompanied by "rude music and obscene dancing." This experience with German intemperance and Sabbath breaking, he felt, better enabled him to understand the lot of the foreign missionary. [60]

This led Rev. Hill to conclude that the Germans were neither God-fearing nor governed by an internal moral compass. Instead, they only feared the law and respected brute force. Boonville, Missouri, pastor John Wettle agreed. As such, he saw the clear need for Boonville to enact an ordinance prohibiting the conduct of business on Sundays. To Rev. Wettle, this enabled Boonville – to the "great advantage to the cause of Christ" – to prevent sinners from desecrating the Sabbath.

Rev. Wettle also sought the enactment of an ordinance prohibiting dram shops. In February 1856, he signed a petition to that effect. This outraged local Germans who were well known to be unfriendly "to this good cause." The Germans believed – and were encouraged in this belief by those "on the whisky side" – that the very purpose of such ordinances was to oppress them. In signing the petition, Rev. Wettle aroused the "evil passions of some wicked hearts." On various nights, opponents of the proposed ordinance disturbed Rev. Wettle and his family, causing them "great suffering." So much so, that Rev. Wettle resolved to leave and, to this end, preached a farewell sermon.

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[60] Hill to Badger, August 17, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 100); see also March 1853 *Home Missionary,* 256 for edited version of Hill letter.

To his surprise, after the service, a church committee asked him to preach one more Sunday. On that Sunday, everything changed. "[A]ll the wrongs and prejudices were acknowledged before the congregation" and he was urged to stay. Even better, the citizens of Boonville seemingly underwent a change of heart. They now embraced temperance. Those who had boldly carried home a jug during the day would only do so now at night. People were now reluctant even to carry a jug of vinegar for fear of it being mistaken for whiskey. Rev. Wettle expected approximately three-quarters of county taxpayers to sign the temperance petition and for the ordinance prohibiting drams shops to be enacted. He was understandably pleased. Without a hint of irony, Rev. Wettle concluded that the Germans were coming to understand "that a man has a right in this country to do as he pleases, if he pleases to do right." [61]

Given their status as citizens of a New Jerusalem, a "shining city on the hill," New England Calvinists had long felt in the position to tell others how to conduct themselves morally. This naturally arose from New England covenant theology. There, God punished public sins in the present. Traditionally, New England religious leaders had acted in cooperation with civil magistrates to enforce civic morality. It was natural, as a part of their effort to bring about immigrant assimilation, for missionaries to conclude that, if moral suasion and public approbation should fail, they should resort to legal enforcement.[62]

Immigrants often pushed back. The AHMS interpreted this resistance as "stubbornness" and "great tenacity" growing out of immigrant Catholicism or rationalist hostility to true religion. Sometimes, immigrant resistance could turn sinister. Once, at

[61] Wettle to "Dear Brethren", March 10, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1287, 1288); Wettle to "Dear Sir", June 10, 1856 (Reel 156, Image 1024, 1025); Wettle to "Dear Brethren", March 10, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1022); Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," December 10, 1956 (Reel 156, Image 1034); see also December 1854 *Home Missionary,* 197 for edited version of Wettle letter.

[62] Young, *Bearing Witness against Sin,* 77; Sengupta, *For God and Mammon,* 79-82

midnight, someone threw rocks through two windows in Rev. Charles Nestel's house in Hermann, Missouri. Based on the size of the stones and their direction toward his wife and his bed, Rev. Nestel concluded that they had been intended to injure them. On another night, the same was repeated at the home of one of his church elders.

Another missionary told of being given a nickname and enduring abuse while passing on the street. Once, both he and his wife had dirt thrown at them. They were forced to take a room above a tavern for lack of available housing and were kept awake on many nights listening to "vulgar ballads, blasphemies, and the most abusive language against us." Once, at 1:00 a.m., three drunken men tried to force their way into the room where his wife was sick. They had no defense but prayer but the "the Almighty protected us." [63]

All of this led Boonville, Missouri, pastor John Wettle to conclude that German churches would do a great deal better if they were more "Americanized." In order to achieve this, German churches needed to eliminate errant old world practices. To the AHMS, the most pressing needed changes – and, to the immigrants, the most contentious – dealt with the criteria for church membership and access to church sacraments. In Germany, all citizens were required by law to be members of the state church. Therefore, regardless of their religious disposition, parents would have their children baptized as infants and later confirmed as adolescents. These rites were essentially civil acts, necessary in order to enjoy the rights of citizenship. While universal, church membership was often pro forma rather than being based on sincere commitment.[64]

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[63] Nestel to D.P. Noyes, August 11, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 137); June 1853 *Home Missionary,* 54; 1857 Annual Report, 123.

[64] Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," June 10, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 294); see also October 1855 *Home Missionary,* 248 for edited version of the Wettle letter; May 1857 Annual Report, 124-126.

These "exceedingly lax" practices flew in the face of American practice. Calvinism required a change of heart and regeneration of the spirit as a pre-condition of church membership. The old world practices, which had the effect of "filling up the churches with those who make no profession of having been born again" also had the effect of allowing "the wicked, the careless and the formalist" access to the communion table. If churches did not require a change of heart as a precondition of membership, ultimately, there would be "[l]ittle or no distinction … between the church and the world." [65]

To the AHMS, there was a clear need to change old world practice. There was also awareness that change couldn't be achieved overnight. Pressing Germans too hard might "excite a tremendous spirit of opposition" that might "drive them beyond our influence." Throughout the 1850s, the AHMS sought slowly to bring about compliance. In 1853, the AHMS sent questionnaires to its German pastors asking their practices regarding admission to membership and access to the sacraments. By 1857, the AHMS concluded that it must take a harder stand. After all, this was Christ's Church and He set the rules. Therefore, the AHMS executive committee declared that it would only support churches that required "credible evidence of piety" as a condition of membership. Applicants for membership should be able to demonstrate in their manner of life that they had experienced a saving regeneration of the spirit. [66]

AHMS missionaries sought to educate immigrant Germans on the importance of the issue. In 1856, at the opening ceremony of a Presbyterian Church with a mixed German and American congregation in Boonville, Missouri, the first sermon was delivered in English and the second in German. The main object of the second sermon

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[65] 1854 Annual Report, 59.
[66] February, 1857 *Home Missionary,* 229-234; 1857 Annual Report, 126.

was to stress the importance of a "change of heart in order to become earthly members of the church." [67]

These new practices placed Pastor Frederic Delveau in a difficult position. His church was located in Bremen, Missouri, the same St. Louis suburb as Rev. Timothy Hill's Fairmont Presbyterian Church. Having arrived from Germany in 1854, he spoke little English and preached to his mixed German and Dutch congregation in their languages. His congregation liked the old world system. Indeed, some muttered that they would stop paying Rev. Delveau's salary if he ceased delivering sermons "in the old way." They expected to be allowed to take communion without first producing evidence of a working of the Spirit. For over a year, Rev. Delveau wrestled with the issue. During this time, despite "harassment," he withheld communion from all. Finally, he began to offer it but only to those who could offer evidence of regeneration. The new policy caused the uproar he had feared. Several congregants left his church.

Rev. Delveau also refused to provide the sacrament of baptism freely on demand. Rather, he only provided it to the children of members. This practice produced similar anger. On one occasion, two men brought their children eighteen miles for baptism and were enraged to be refused. They heaped "[c]urses…and words which I would not repeat… invoking all the spirits of hell to torment me." One man was especially vocal but Rev. Delveau stood his ground "in holy earnest trembling with fear." He warned the man that his curses might settle on his own head, and, indeed, the man died suddenly only a year later.

Although Rev. Delveau provided religious instruction to the children in his congregation, he did not then automatically provide confirmation. The children had been

[67] Wettle to "Dear Brethren of the A.H.M.S.," March 10, 1856 (Reel 156, Image 1021).

diligent in learning their catechism but this, by itself, did not ensure regeneration and an entitlement to confirmation. His refusal upset both the children and their parents. The "children believed that they were to be heathen; they also desired to be happy in heaven." In response, some parents took their children to a neighboring church to be confirmed. By so doing, they "destroyed" their relation with Rev. Delveau. This resulted in his refusal to provide "preaching in their house for a whole year." Other parents were successful in having Rev. Delveau's salary withheld. Ultimately, however, Rev. Delveau prevailed. With the support of the children, his congregation "did not carry out their measures against me, and my enemies changed to friends and, after that, I received my salary." [68]

Other missionaries to immigrant Germans sought to avoid confrontation. St. Joseph, Missouri pastor J. B. Madoulet, recognized that regeneration of the spirit should be a precondition of church membership. In the case of infant baptism, correct practice might limit it to children of regenerate parents. However, after consideration, Rev. Madoulet determined that a change of heart was irrelevant in the case of infant baptisms. Consequently, to avoid conflict, he ceased providing it altogether.[69]

AHMS missionaries agreed on the importance of inculcating a reverence for American institutions among Germans. To Rev. Timothy Hill, the best way to accomplish this was to reach them as children. In October, 1855, a number of children from German families started attending Sabbath school. These families were "highly educated, polite and influential" and among the best of the German population. Rev. Hill

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[68] Werth to David Coe, March 1, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1008); Delveau to "Dear Brother," January 15, 1857 (Image 157, Image 247 et seq.); see March 1857 *Home Missionary,* 268, 269 for edited version of Delveau letter;

[69] Madoulet to Badger, April 20, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 285).

rejoiced that he was now in a position to influence their children. Recognizing the importance of this new development, he concluded that he "cannot lose one of them." [70]

In January 1854, Rev. C.H. Hekmann reported that his German congregants "are becoming more American in their habits and customs – they are conforming in religious matters very fast." Most were still Catholic, but "yearn[ed] for the bread of life…not the satinalistic dogmas of the old world." He urged the AHMS to provide more missionaries to Missouri to promote the cause of Protestantism.[71]

AHMS missionaries often failed to achieve success. In various instances, the AHMS recognized this and felt compelled to cut its losses. One such instance was the AHMS effort to reach the French immigrant population in St. Louis. Rev. F. Michel, a French immigrant himself, sought to form a church among the city's French population. Due to language difference, the French tended to cluster apart from the native born. To Rev. F. Michel's dismay, this continued self-segregation made it difficult for him to bypass Catholic influence. It continued "untrammeled dominion" over the French community in St. Louis. It was thus "Spain or Italy on a small scale." Making inroads was exceedingly difficult. One woman, in order to avoid trouble with her devout Catholic husband, refused to attend Rev. Michel's church.

Rev. Michel detected – and hoped to exploit – a streak of anti-clerical sentiment, especially among men. He believed them to despise priests for "their avarice and their intriguing spirit." In darker moments, however, Rev. Michel determined that his efforts were "hopeless." Much of this he attributed to widespread illiteracy which went hand-in-glove with Catholic "superstition" and "fanaticism." To Rev. Michel, French

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[70] Hill to Badger, October 1, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1124);

[71] C. H. Hekmann to "Rev. Messrs. Badger and Coe", January 15, 154 (Reel 156, Image 771); Hekmann to "Rev. Messrs. Badger, Coe and Noyes", July 15, 1855 (Reel 156, 1098); Hekmann to Badger, June 21, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 80).

stubbornness was exemplified by one man who told him: "I do not believe anything of what they teach us in the church, however, I would let myself be killed for my Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Religion."

Given Rev. Michel's lack of success, the AHMS was reluctant to continue support. The American Tract Society turned down his request for printed material in French. In October 1855, Rev. Michel gave up and made his last report to the AHMS. In May 1856, Rev. Hill, the Missouri AHMS agent, reported that the "French church…will never apply again. Its pastor is about to return to Europe & the church will probably die." [72]

During the 1850s, the AHMS sought to cajole its churches serving foreign immigrants into correct practice regarding church membership and access to the sacraments. Both required a saving regeneration of the spirit. By 1857, the AHMS had determined that it needed to take a harder line. Continued aid would now be conditioned on these churches requiring a change of heart as a condition of church membership. Also during the 1850s, the AHMS sought to address slaveholding by members of its churches through moral suasion. Its missionaries would bring about an end to the practice through patient efforts and preaching. In December 1856, pressure from northern donors forced the AHMS to take a harder line here as well.

[72] Michel to "Dear Sir," July, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 120 et seq.); Michel to "Dear Sir," October, 1852 (Reel 156, Image 128); Michel to "Dear Gentlemen and Brethren," April 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1149 et seq.); Michel to "the A.H.M.S. in New York," October 6, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1151 et seq.); Hill to Badger, May 11, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 66 et seq.).

AHMS and Slavery

When Bremen, Missouri, pastor Timothy Hill first arrived in the state in 1845 his principal concern was slavery. He wished that it be "distinctly known" that he was its "uncompromising enemy." Early on, he concluded that it would be the prime obstacle to his prospects for success in his work. This uncompromising hostility resulted in an early conflict with a church elder. It also caused him to decline ordination because it would involve slaveholding ministers laying hands on him during the ordination service. [73]

Rev. Hill subscribed to a northern, free-labor view that slavery was debilitating both to master and slave. To Rev. Hill, it affected every nerve and fiber of society and acted to paralyze individual initiative. The slave economy produced large farms too dispersed to permit the formation of compact neighborhoods. The resulting scattered villages did not provide a suitable environment for the industrious classes – the artist, manufacturer, mechanic and free laborer. Without their presence, it was difficult for the Gospel to flourish.

Slavery also made it difficult to spread the Gospel among the slaves. Rev. Hill did not encounter any slaves able to read the Bible or more than a few who made any pretension to piety. They were almost never included in family worship. Often, when praying with a family, Rev. Hill's heart would sink as his mind wandered into "that dark kitchen where the slave must remain." To that slave, "no Bible is opened; for him, no prayer is heard." Only a very few ever attended preaching.

To Rev. Hill's knowledge, Missouri law did not forbid the teaching of slaves. However, "ninety-nine hundredths of them receive no instruction, not even in a Sabbath

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[73] Hill, "A Missionary Enters Missouri," 1; John B. Hill, "A Missionary Perseveres in Missouri: More Excerpts from the Diary of Timothy Hill, 1846-1849," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 25, no. 2 (1947): 117, 122;

school." Public sentiment in Missouri against teaching slaves amounted to a "prohibition equally effective." In fact, in 1847, the same year he wrote this, the Missouri legislature enacted a statute making it illegal to "keep a school" to educate blacks. Violation of the statute was punishable by fine or imprisonment for a term of six months.

Some blacks received oral instruction but usually from "preachers of their own color." Rev. Hill found them to be "lamentably ignorant – scarcely able to read a sentence much less to comprehend and explain its truth." The slaves' "preference for preachers of their own color" perhaps arose because white preachers spent so little time with them. However, if white preachers did otherwise, they might raise the suspicion of being abolitionist. Given the nature of the slave economy, many slaves were kept home on the Sabbath in order "to cook, feed stock, catch and take care of horses and carriages for the family." If their masters allowed them to attend church, it was often the white church and was motivated by a desire to prevent them from associating together outside the master's watchful eye.

Slavery had deleterious effects on whites as well. Slaveholders educated their children – if at all – either by private tutor or by sending them to school in the city. The slaveholder, thus, had little incentive to support neighborhood schools. Whites of more modest means lacked the resources either to send their children away to school or to sustain a system of free schools. The scattered population and concentration of wealth left local churches few and feeble. As Rev. Hill asked and then answered himself: "Why are not the churches of Missouri as numerous and vigorous as those of Illinois?...That answer comes in one word, and that is one of the saddest words which an American Christian is ever called to write – Slavery." Given his hostility to slavery, Rev. Hill concluded early on that he must leave Missouri for a new field of labor. Only Missouri

HMS Secretary Artemus Bullard's argument that doing so would simply "leave the sin to cure itself" caused Rev. Hill to remain. [74]

For approximately twenty years after its founding in 1826, the AHMS sought to avoid confronting the issue of slavery. While it did not support churches with slave holding pastors, it did support churches containing slave holding members. Starting in the 1830s, it came under increasing pressure to discontinue this practice – in effect, to end its operations in slave states. Since the AHMS relied entirely on charitable receipts to fund its work, it was sensitive to anything that might negatively impact fundraising. In May 1844, in an effort to mollify contributors, for the first time, in its Annual Report, it cited slavery as a hindrance to the spread of the Gospel. Indeed, it was the foremost hindrance. Slavery was a "horrible anomaly" among American institutions. It covered a large portion of the country and "enthrall[ed] more than two and a half millions of souls, made in the image of God, in a bondage worse than Egyptian." [75]

The AHMS endeavored to downplay the extent of its activities in the slave states. It supported only "forty or fifty" missionaries – thirty in Missouri. Moreover, due to southern reluctance to accept northern missionaries and because of the reluctance of northern missionaries to serve there, the AHMS did not expect the number to grow. [76]

The American Missionary Association (AMA) was founded in 1846. It was an avowedly abolitionist society. AMA fund raising immediately began to eat into AHMS revenues, thereby exacerbating its fundraising anxieties. In its 1853 annual report, the AHMS admitted this concern. It noted that critics were making accusations to

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[74] May 1847 *Home Missionary,* 1-3; June 1856 *Home Missionary,* 43; Hill, "A Missionary Enters Missouri," 1, 2, 10-12; Donnie D. Bellamy, "The Education of Blacks in Missouri Prior to 1861," *The Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 2 (1974): 150.

[75] March 1853 *Home Missionary*, 266; AHMS to Rev. Daniel Emerson, August 21, 1852 (Reel 292); AHMS to Rev. George Harlan, August 16, 1854 (Reel 294); 1844 Annual Report, 94-98.

[76] May 1832 Home Missionary, 55; March 1853 *Home Missionary,* 266; 1853 Annual Report, 79, 120-122; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions*, 292.

"philanthropic persons" that the AHMS "countenance[d]… or at least did not discountenance…slavery."

Moreover, the Congregational Church, an AHMS founder and large supporter, was exerting pressure. The AMA was largely a Congregationalist enterprise and there was danger that Congregational churches would shift to their contributions to it in preference to the AHMS. At their 1852 convention in Albany, New York, the Congregationalists adopted a resolution urging the AHMS only to aid churches in slaveholding states whose ministers preached in support of speedy abolition. In instances where ministers were not permitted so to preach, in obedience to Matthew 10:14, they should "depart out of that City." [77]

The AHMS denied that its missionaries either explicitly or tacitly supported slavery. Nor did they "suffer the subject to sleep." Rather, while employing "discretion as to times and methods," they advocated slavery's abolition. They did so even when it exposed missionaries to the risk of "opposition, opprobrium, and even … personal danger." Moral suasion, rather than confrontation, was the appropriate approach. It would yield the best results over time.

Indeed, to the AHMS, the presence of its missionaries "in the very midst of slavery" rather than "at a distance" would lend power to their efforts. It was a balanced rather than an "ultra" approach. The AHMS would not withhold support from slaveholding congregations nor would it withdraw from the slave states. It would meet slavery on its own field, bearing "open and unembarrassed testimony" against it. To the

[77] March 1853 *Home Missionary,* 266; Thrift, *Operations of the Home Missionary Society,* 115, 116; Howard, *Conscience and Slavery,* 112.

AHMS, this policy had already born fruit. In its view, no other group, either in or out of the slave states exerted so great an influence as did AHMS missionaries. [78]

Rev. Hill did not feel able to bear open and unembarrassed testimony. He did not risk speaking to the slaves in private for fear of setting in motion "a train of opposition" that would drive him from Missouri. To him, masters were often as inaccessible as the slaves. Rev. Hill's status as a Yankee made them suspicious. The fate of Rev. Samuel Grant in West Ely, Missouri was illustrative. There, in May, 1855, he lost his position when "an irreligious man" accused him of holding abolitionist views. "Prejudice & Falsehood raise their voice together against an eastern preacher…even if he does nothing else but preach…I would that we had more preachers but they are not allowed to stay." [79]

Notwithstanding the AHMS assertion that its missionaries refused to remain silent, when it published missionary letters critical of slavery in the *Home Missionary*, its monthly magazine, it sometimes did so without identifying the missionary. This suggests an attempt to avoid generating local hostility. Indeed, when the *Home Missionary* published Rev. Hill's 1847 lament regarding the deleterious effects of slavery, it did so without revealing either his name or the fact that he wrote it from Missouri.[80]

Donor pressure caused the AHMS, starting in 1853, to begin questioning its missionaries regarding slave holding in their congregations. These questionnaires asked, among other things, how many church members owned slaves, whether they did so under the "law of love," whether there were instances of church discipline arising from cases of cruelty, whether there was anything to hinder preaching on the subject of immediate

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[78] 1853 Annual Report, 120-124; March 1853 *Home Missionary,* 266-269.
[79] May 1847 *Home Missionary*, 1-3; Hill, "A Missionary Enters Missouri," 10, 11; Grant to Coe, April 6, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1086, 1087); Tatlow to "Secretaries A.H.M.S.," May 1, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1257).
[80] May 1847 *Home Missionary,*1-3; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 187, 188.

emancipation, whether the minister had free access to the slaves and whether his congregation looked upon slavery as being of divine authority to be perpetuated or as a great moral wrong. [81]

Perhaps influenced by the concern that continued AHMS aid depended on their answers, or because they honestly felt that it was the truth, most Missouri missionaries responded that they were free to speak their mind. Rev. A. G. Taylor, in Boliver, Missouri, was one such missionary. A Southerner by birth, he had served in five different slave states during his eighteen year career as a minister. Rev. Taylor felt that he had always had access both to masters and slaves. If he saw either master or slave lose sight of his duty, he would refer them to Ephesians 6:5-10. There, Paul urges slaves to serve their masters with sincerity of heart and masters to do the same, knowing that God shows no partiality in heaven.

Rev. Taylor often went into the "Negro's humble dwelling" in order to teach the great themes of the Gospel and to pray. Afterward, he would go into the parlor to discuss slavery with the master "in all its features & influences for time & eternity." Consequently, he had been instrumental in bringing many slaves to knowledge of the truth. Once, at a camp meeting, the whites and blacks had split off into separate tents. Rev. Taylor preached to the blacks and, in the course of doing so, witnessed "the work of grace" which began with the blacks and spread to the whites. By the end of the camp meeting, Rev. Taylor believed that twenty or thirty persons had been saved, many of them slaves.

In order to have such free access, however, Rev. Taylor would first visit with the master and convince him that he would not "exert any bad influence on the slave's mind,

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[81] Thrift, *Operations of the American Home Missionary Society,* 121, 122; Maul to Badger, August 22, 1853 (Reel 156, Image 448).

so as to make him disobedient, or less faithful." To do so, would be to do the slave "a very great unkindness…for it might cause him to do [something] for which he would be punished."

Rev. Taylor had no plans to preach against slavery. This wasn't because of fear of "Captain Lynch, his rod, tar & feathers" but, rather, because he didn't see it as his duty. God would remove slavery in his own time. In the meantime, Rev. Taylor's duty was to preach the Gospel. His congregation was predominantly anti-slavery. However, they recognized that little good was likely to result from "raising an excitement on the subject; therefore, as prudent men, they remain silent." Rev. Taylor reminded the AHMS that by publishing his letter in his name "you can destroy my influence as a minister in the South." He pointed out the case of a Springfield, Missouri minister against whom the cry of abolition had been raised and, in consequence, had been forced to leave the state. [82]

From the 1830s onward, northern and southern attitudes regarding slavery began to harden. Abolitionists' attacks on slavery caused southerners to become defensive and develop a systematic theology of rebuttal. As the AHMS noted, "[f]ormerly, the language of ministers and laymen at the South was, 'We look at slavery very much as our Northern brethren do – as a great moral wrong, to be removed before the progress of the Gospel, and we desire your forbearance and cooperation and fraternal aid, to effect this object.' Recently, it has been earnestly defended, by the most prominent in the ministry at the South, as an institution of divine authority, on the same foundation as civil government and the family relation, benevolent and Christianizing in its character, to be upheld and extended for the mutual benefit of the owner and the enslaved." [83]

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[82] Taylor to "Secretaries & friends of the A.H.M.S.," February 21, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 175 et seq.); Taylor to "Executive Committee of the A.H.M.S.," April 30, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 328 et seq.); see July 1856 *Home Missionary,* 72, 73 for edited version of the February 21, 1857 Taylor letter published without Taylor's identity or location.

[83] July 1857 *Home Missionary,* 61; 1857 Annual Report, 56.

Indeed, many southerners came to view northerners as the actual sinners. Industrial capitalism, and its supporting ideology of individualism and free labor, produced societal winners and losers. Wage laborers were the big losers and, under capitalism, were harshly exploited. Rev. James Thornwell, a prominent South Carolina theologian, argued that population growth would eventually lead to scarcity and class conflict. Only hierarchical societies, in which the ruling class accepted responsibility to be its brother's keeper, could avoid this Hobbesian future. Social hierarchy and slavery represented social progress. Indeed, economic pressure would eventually force all societies to organize on this basis. [84]

Southern theology was based on specific passages of scripture. As Rev. Thornwell stated, the only acceptable argument is "thus it is written." Leviticus 25:44 sanctioned buying, selling, holding and bequeathing slaves. Abraham owned slaves. The New Testament did not condemn slavery. In fact, 1 Peter 2:18 instructed slaves to "be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to the kind and gentle but to the overbearing." Specific scripture was buttressed by the proposition that, absent sin – and, in this view, slavery was not sinful given its specific Biblical sanction – the church should stay out of civil matters. Romans 13:1 instructed Christians to "obey the state authorities, because … the existing authorities have been put there by God." In Matthew 22:21, Jesus instructed his questioners to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and to God that which is God's." [85]

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[84] Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, "The Divine Sanction of Social Order: The Religious Foundations of the Southern Slaveholder's World View," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 55, no. 2 (1987): 218, 219; McKivigan, *The War against Proslavery Religion,* 25, 30; Lewis M. Purifoy, "The Southern Methodist Church and the Proslavery Argument," *The Journal of Southern History* 32, no. 3 (1966): 326, 334;

[85] William W. Freehling, "James Henley Thornwell's Mysterious Antislavery Moment," The Journal of Southern History 57, no. 3 (1991): 388. While asserting that slavery, as Biblically sanctioned, was not sinful, some southern theologians conceded that, as practiced, it could become so. Citing Colossians 4:1 which enjoins "Masters [to] give unto your servant that which is just and equal; knowing that ye have a

Northern, abolitionist theology, by contrast, was based less on specific passages and more on the general spirit of the Bible. Northerners especially relied on "Golden Rule," found in Matthew 7:12, which instructed Christians to treat others as they would wish to be treated. Abolitionists also relied on Enlightenment concepts of natural law to argue that humans, in a state of nature, were innately good and possessed inalienable rights – a notion which, of course, flew in the face of the Calvinist concept of humans as innately depraved. While abolitionist pastors grew more strident, a considerable number of northern theologians, including Rev. Moses Stuart, a leading light on the Andover Theological Seminary faculty, found the southern case, based on specific scripture, to be compelling. For Missouri missionaries of a generally anti-slavery bent, this created an element of moral uncertainty and justified their rejecting an "ultra" position on the matter.[86]

This hardening of attitudes may have led southerners to become less tolerant of criticism or perhaps the AHMS simply changed its perception. In any event, by 1857, the AHMS had taken the position that its missionaries were not able freely to speak their minds on slavery. The AHMS now recognized that, often, it wasn't sufficient for the missionary even simply to remaining silent. "The liberty of speech on this subject, which was formerly enjoyed, is in many places no longer allowed." Indeed, silence now "awakened distrust." To be accepted, the missionary had to become a slavery "advocate" or his work as a minister was done and his personal safety was no longer guaranteed. [87]

Even as theological positions hardened during the 1850s, northern donor pressure continued to build. "[A]nti-slavery sentiment among the supporters of the Society has

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Master in heaven," these theologians urged that slaves be subject evangelizing efforts, be provided literacy training in order to read and understand the Bible and their families kept intact.

[86] McKivigan, *War against Proslavery Religion,* 30; Genovese, "Divine Sanction of Social Order," 215.

[87] 1857 Annual Report, 56, 57; May 1857 *Home Missionary,* 22; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 291, 292.

been gaining volume and strength." Moreover, the pressure was coming from New England, New York and the Northwest, areas contributing most heavily to the AHMS. By AHMS account, these areas produced more than nine-tenths of its revenue. This fact registered loudly. The AHMS acknowledged that "supporters have made known… their views and wishes in regard to this subject and have called for the adoption of a definite *rule*." [88]

At the same time, the number of AHMS missionaries in the slave states was decreasing. In 1835, the AHMS aided fifty three missionaries in the South. In 1845, there were thirty-six, twenty in Missouri. By 1860, there were only three, none in Missouri. This decline was accompanied by a drop-off in southern donations. In 1856, the AHMS received less than $2,000 in donations from slave states. [89]

In December 1856, the AHMS finally succumbed to donor pressure. Its executive committee adopted a resolution providing that the AHMS would no longer grant aid to churches containing slaveholding members, unless the applicant could produce satisfactory evidence that the slaveholding relationship was justified given its particular circumstances. The resolution did not elaborate on the sorts of circumstance that might justify continued aid but intimated that cases falling under the "law of love" or those rendered unavoidable by state law (presumably where state law forbade manumission), the obligations of guardianship or the demands of humanity (presumably where slaves were too young, too old or too infirm to fend for themselves) might suffice.

The relevant factors to be considered by the AHMS in making a determination included such matters as whether (1) the churches and ministers considered the system of slavery to be divine and, therefore, to be perpetuated, (2) the slaveholder owned slaves

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[88] 1857 Annual Report, 128.
[89] Ibid, 128; May 1857 *Home Missionary,* 22; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 291, 292.

from principle, limited only by the means of purchasing more, (3) the family relationship among the slaves was inviolable or subject to the profit of the master and (4) slaves were kept in ignorance of God's word. In effect, the AHMS shifted the burden to applicant churches to justify continued aid in light of its member's slaveholding. The failure to adequately respond would result in denial of the application. [90]

The AHMS saw the new rule as occupying middle ground. The AHMS had considered the polar extremes of, on one hand, withholding all funding of churches with slaveholding members or, on the other, continuing funding notwithstanding the presence of slaveholding members. It chose the third, middle option, that is, to "grant or withhold assistance, as the facts furnished might suggest." The AHMS noted with satisfaction that "the most liberal supporters of the Society" had already approved the rules change. [91]

In January, 1857, at the time that the AHMS announced the rules change, the application of Rev. Levi R. Morrison's church in Cross Timbers, Missouri, was then pending. Unlike many AHMS missionaries, Rev. Morrison was a Virginian, not a Northerner. His church contained approximately 94 members, eight of whom were slaveholders and 21 of whom were slaves. His church's application, therefore, faced scrutiny regarding the specific nature of those slaveholding relationships.

Rev. Morrison responded to the AHMS inquiry cordially. He acknowledged the AHMS, as a benefactor, had the right to make the inquiry. He stated that, with the exception of one slave, all were either "home born" or inherited. In other words, the slaveholding members of his church had not voluntarily entered into the marketplace in order to acquire them. In his view, they were all treated with humanity and cared for

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[90] 1857 Annual Report, 129; May 1857 *Home Missionary,* 23, 24.
[91] May 1857 *Home Missionary,* 23.

with affectionate tenderness. He stated that he faced no impediment in preaching the Gospel fully to his congregants, both black and white.

The AHMS viewed Rev. Morrison's response as insufficiently specific and asked if he would "have the kindness to give us a little more information". By then, however, Rev. Morrison had reached the limits of his patience. He did not dispute the AHMS right to make the earlier inquiry and gave "unfeigned" thanks for prior aid. However, given the specific Biblical sanctions of slavery, neither the AHMS nor he was permitted to pry into slaveholder's motives under the guise of inquiring about the possible application of a "law of love." Consequently, he determined that he had sufficiently addressed the issue and stated: "I do not intend to answer further." [92]

Rev. Morrison wasn't alone among Missouri missionaries in viewing the rules change as ill-considered. Among them was Rev. Timothy Hill. Over time, Rev. Hill had become a prominent pastor. By the 1850s, in addition to serving as the pastor of the Fairmont Presbyterian Church in Bremen, he had become the Corresponding Secretary for the Missouri HMS and was the AHMS agent in Missouri. He was active in religious organizations, regularly attending synod meetings and contributing articles to the local press. Indeed, he was so active, and so often away at synod meetings, that his congregation sometimes grumbled that he neglected his pastoral duties.

As he matured, Rev. Hill came to appreciate what he considered to be moderation in matters relating to slavery. Given time, he believed that its demise was inevitable. Eastern emigration to Missouri would be slavery's cure. For years, the tide of emigration

[92] Morrison to Badger, January 20, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 303 et seq.); Morrison to Badger, March 10, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 306 et seq.); Badger to Morrison, January 2, 1857; Badger to Morrison, February 8, 1857.

had been pouring in from the "Northern hive" and would inevitably change Missouri demographics. History was on the anti-slavery side. [93]

Rev. Hill did not see the AHMS rules change as occupying the virtuous middle ground. Its consequences were simply too severe. In 1857, half of the AHMS missionaries in slave states were located in Missouri. AHMS support was, therefore, critical. Its loss would create a gap in funding that neither the local Missouri HMS, nor the Southern Aid Society – founded in 1853 by anti-abolitionist northerners to aid churches in slaveholding states – could fill. The rules change would result in church closings and the loss of needed preaching. It would plunge Missouri into darkness. [94]

Rev. Hill emphasized that the Missouri HMS was not attempting to apologize for slavery. However, the rules change simply wasn't needed. With millennialist optimism, Rev Hill argued that "slavery is waning before the intelligence, morality and progress by which the present age is distinguished." He was "every day impressed at the rapid progress of antislavery in this state. Men who a few months ago scarcely dared to whisper to each other on this subject now discuss it openly. Slavery is doomed here." [95]

Rev. Hill also questioned how the AHMS – a thousand miles away in New York – could adequately determine whether any given slaveholding relationship in Missouri was justified. It was a subject on which reasonable minds could differ. In his view, someone in Missouri might answer the question differently from someone in New York. [96]

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[93] Hill to Coe, March, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 266, 267); John B. Hill, "Home Mission Changes in Missouri" *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 28, no. 4, (1950): 242, 243.
[94] Hill to Coe, February 5, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 258 et seq.); McKivigan, *War Against Proslavery Religion,* 119; Victor B. Howard, "The Southern Aid Society and the Slavery Controversy," *Church History* 41, no 2 (1972): 213.
[95] Hill to Coe, May, 12, 1857, (Reel 157, Image 273 et seq.); Hill to Coe, March 1857 (Reel 157, Image 266).
[96] Hill to Coe, March 10, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 262 et seq.).

The proper course would be for the AHMS to continue aid and allow each pastor to endeavor to reform offenders. Failing that, instances of "unjustifiable" slaveholding could be dealt with according to the Presbyterian Church's disciplinary rules. To Rev. Hill, the rules change would improperly cause churches to lose aid unless they expelled slaveholders without first making the sorts of patient efforts toward reform that God required. Here, Rev. Hill turned a longstanding AHMS argument on itself. For years, the AHMS had argued that it was not in a position legitimately to refuse aid to churches with slaveholding members. It was a missionary society, providing financial support, not a church body setting terms of membership or discipline. [97]

In May 1857, Rev. Hill informed the AHMS that, since the Missouri HMS was "utterly unable to see the wisdom or justice of the new rule", it was "compelled reluctantly to abandon all hope of further cooperation." Rev. Hill noted that he had held – and cherished – his AHMS commission for almost twelve years. He grew sentimental. "I could easily weep if tears would be of any avail" but noted that "the deed is done." He ended by noting "I am thankful that responsibility of this kind does not rest on my shoulders. And now Farewell." [98]

The end officially came in September 1859 in a letter to the AHMS from Rev. J. J. Porter, Rev. Hill's successor as Corresponding Secretary. It informed the AHMS that the Missouri HMS had stricken Article 1 of its constitution. That article had provided simply that the Missouri HMS was an AHMS auxiliary. The "design and effect" of this action was to "sever all connection" between the two societies. [99]

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[97] May 1853 Annual Report, 122; Hill to Coe, May 12, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 273, 277); Howard, *Conscience and Slavery,* 159; McKivigan, *War against Proslavery Religion,* 113.
[98] Hill to Coe, May 12, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 273, 277-280);
[99] Porter to Badger, September 2, 1859 (Reel 157, Image 396).

Notwithstanding the Missouri HMS position in opposition, a few Missouri missionaries supported the rules change. One was LaGrange, Missouri pastor W. W. Whipple. Rev. Whipple had arrived in Missouri in 1845 as a member of the "Missouri Ten," the same group of young seminary graduates that included Rev. Hill. Rev. Whipple felt that the rules change was appropriate notwithstanding that it would have a "very disastrous" effect on Missouri churches. The AHMS had entered the South "with peaceful salutations of the Gospel [but] in almost every instance … [has] been received with suspicion [and] treated with indifference." Given this, Rev. Whipple felt that the AHMS should no longer continue its equivocal position on slavery. [100]

Rev. Whipple had a slaveholding member of his congregation. He hoped that the AHMS would continue to support his church. It quickly became clear that it would not do so. The AHMS responded to Rev. Whipple's inquiry regarding the possibility of continued aid by pointing out that, while only the executive committee could grant exceptions to individual churches, it "could give no encouragement." Current circumstances were now different from those of "former times." Even German pastor Fred Delveau's church, which contained no slave holding members, became a casualty of the rupture. In January 1857, the AHMS denied its pending application for aid.[101]

Most Missouri missionaries supported the Missouri HMS in its opposition to the rules change. While almost all AHMS missionaries in Missouri were personally opposed to slavery, they feared that the new rule would deprive the state of crucial AHMS funding. Moreover, they were instinctively adverse to positions that could be regarded as "ultra" with regard to slavery. Indeed, to Rev. Hill, one of principal virtues of New

[100] Whipple to Noyes, January 10, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 344, 345).
[101] Whipple to Badger, August 23, 1858 (Reel 157, Image 383); Badger to Whipple, August 30, 1858; Nelson to Coe, February 4, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 308 et seq.); Delveau to Badger, February 23, 1867 (Reel 157, Image 252); Hill to Coe, February 5, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 258); Badger to Delveau, January 28, 1857.

School Presbyterianism was that it represented a "healthful medium between the ultraists of the North and South." As such, it was better adapted to Missouri's "moral necessities." Among whites in pre-war Missouri, the new AHMS rule was, doubtless, to be viewed as an "ultra" position. [102]

Some, like Rev. A. G. Taylor, felt that the new rule wouldn't help the anti-slavery cause. Like Rev. Hill, he felt that, if left alone, slavery in Missouri would be abolished in a few years. However, to Rev. Taylor, this would not likely benefit Missouri slaves. Rather, it would simply result in increased sales of Missouri slaves to "states of a more southern climate & probably to a harder bondage." His church's opposition may also have arisen from a desire not to be told by northerners how to behave. Rev. Taylor's church contained only one slave holding member. The "great majority" of his congregants were opposed to slavery. Nevertheless, they felt that they would be "too much trammeled" by the new rule. Consequently, in April 1857, independent of the action of the Missouri HMS, Rev. Taylor's church went on record as severing its connection with the AHMS. [103]

To Rev. Hill, the rules change left "wounded hearts." He thus resolved that he'd sent his last letter to the AHMS. In fact, he continued to correspond. In his letters, he asked the whereabouts of former missionaries, commented on articles in the *Home Missionary*, worried about "border ruffianism" and "old John Brown" and ruminated about the AHMS' "blunder" in the rules change. However, by the end of the war he had recovered sufficiently to sign his letter to AHMS Secretary Milton Badger: "With pleasant memories for the past and best wishes for the future." [104]

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[102] Hill, *Home Mission Changes,* 242, 243.
[103] Taylor to "Executive Committee of the A.H.M.S.," April 30, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 328, 329).
[104] Hill to Coe, July 12, 1858 (Reel 157, Image 266 et seq.); Hill to Coe, March 27, 1860 (Reel 157, 404); Hill to Badger, September 19, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 617).

In July, 1858, Hill authored and sent a proposed story to the AHMS for publication in the *Home Missionary*. It was titled "An Evening Ride with a Slave." It related the story of a minister, who, having missed the last regularly scheduled stage, hired a wagon and driver from a local livery. The driver was a young slave, "a bright, active lad," who was sadly untutored in religion. Instead of attending church, the young man was required to spend his Sundays minding the livery for his master. The story consisted largely of dialog between the two, with the minister endeavoring to reach the young man. It concluded with the minister recommending to the young slave that he approach his master and request to be allowed to attend church on Sundays. Having learned that the master sometimes prays, the minister concluded that "I think he will let you go to church, if he thinks you want to go." [105]

Rev. Hill's story reflected his evolved thinking. He was no longer a young minister freshly arrived in Missouri, strongly opposed to slavery, who worried about the slave in the dark kitchen being excluded from family prayers. Now, he was now an older minister who believed that "moderation" in these matters was the best course. Slavery – before it disappeared altogether – could be expected to make reasonable accommodation to the slave's religious needs.

The next years marked changes in Rev. Hill's life. New School churches were experiencing financial difficulties as many defected to a Southern Methodist or Old School affiliation. During the winter of 1859/1860, while Rev. Hill was away on synod business, his Fairmont Presbyterian Church defected to the Old School. This was motivated in part by hope of Old School assistance with church debt. Rev. Hill was deeply wounded and resigned as pastor in April, 1860. Sadly, without AHMS assistance,

[105] "An Evening Ride with a Slave" (Reel 157, Image 368-372).

only the "merest" missionary work was then available. Consequently, during the war years, Rev. Hill was, in effect, forced into exile from his beloved Missouri. He served as pastor of a Congregational church in a settlement of immigrant New Englanders in Rosemond, Illinois known as the "Yankee Settlement." After the war, he returned to Missouri and later served as a Presbyterian missionary in Kansas where he started numerous churches during the 1860s and 1870s.[106]

The AHMS long avoided the issue of slavery for fear of driving away southerners. AHMS missionaries in Missouri similarly tended to avoid the subject for fear of offending pro-slavery congregants. In May, 1854, the passage of the Kansas Nebraska Act gave Kansas the right to decide, by ballot, the issue of slavery within its boundaries. Its passage ignited conflict in Kansas that soon spread across the border into Missouri. It became a fight in which no one was allowed to remain neutral. Notwithstanding their customary silence on the issue of slavery, as northern men, missionaries were often presumed – at a minimum – to be covert abolitionists. They and their churches thus became subject to attack during the pre-war troubles. The rupture in relations between the AHMS and the Missouri HMS caused the former to discontinue operations in Missouri for a time. When it returned in the early part of the war – having now made the rules change – the AHMS no longer felt the need to temper its position on the matter. Its newly arriving Missouri missionaries similarly were now overtly anti-slavery.

[106] Hill, "A Missionary Enters Missouri," 1; Hill, "A Missionary Faces Obstacles," 186; Hill, "Home Mission Changes in Missouri," 243- 245, 248, 251- 253.

Pre-War Troubles and Wartime Missouri

The Kansas Nebraska Act, in effect, repealed the Missouri Compromise. It gave the inhabitants of the Kansas Territory the right to determine, by ballot, whether to become a slave or a free territory. The AHMS quickly understood the law's consequences. "[T]he question whether this vast domain should be actually surrendered to the blighting influence of negro slavery, was left to the decision of the actual occupants of the soil. This consideration…soon set in motion a tide of emigration."[107]

President Pierce signed the act on May 30, 1854. The Kansas territory was then opened to settlement. Even before, however, in anticipation of the act's passage, Eli Thayer organized the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Company to promote New England settlement in Kansas. The company was later reorganized as the New England Emigrant Aid Company and its first settlers left Boston in July 1854. By then, settlers from Missouri had already arrived in large numbers and staked claims. The United States government neglected to extinguish Indian titles or provide surveys before opening the territory for settlement. This lapse provided a recipe for violence as pro- and anti-slavery settlers fought over conflicting land claims.

New England Emigrant Aid Company efforts to promote emigration to Kansas quickly aroused hostility in Missouri. In-migrants from New England were not seen as honest settlers, seeking land and a better life but rather as abolitionists bent on causing trouble. If Kansas became a free state, it would join the free states of Illinois and Iowa surrounding Missouri on three of its four sides. Missouri slaves would then have only a relatively short distance in three directions for escape. Rumors also began quickly to

[107] June 1855 *Home Missionary,* 47.

circulate that the New England Emigrant Aid Company was bringing in large numbers of settlers from the slums of eastern cities and Europe. Worse, Missourians were told that the new immigrants were coming armed with the latest Sharpe's rifles, the so-called "Beecher's Bibles." Trouble began almost immediately. [108]

The conflict in Kansas initially favored pro-slavery elements. In November 1854 and March 1855 elections for a congressional delegate and for a territorial legislature resulted in pro-slavery victories. Subsequent elections in December 1855 and January 1856 to adopt a constitution and to elect a territorial legislature and governor resulted in free-state victories. The elections were marked by irregularities, boycotts and violence. The initial elections produced a pro-slavery government and the subsequent elections produced an anti-slavery government. Each purported to constitute the legitimate Kansas government.

Pro-and anti-slavery partisans fought for ascendency. In May, 1856, proslavery men ransacked the offices of free-state newspapers in Lawrence, Kansas and destroyed their presses. John Brown and a group of anti-slavery men then massacred pro-slavery settlers at Pottawatomie Creek. A few months later, in June, 1856, pro-slavery men burned the free-state town of Osawatomie. In May, 1858, a proslavery band murdered free-state settlers at a site north of the Marais des Cygnes River. The Kansas troubles set-up a cycle of violent attack and retribution. Men were forced to take sides. They could be murdered for nothing more than holding pro- or anti-slavery sentiments.[109]

The events in Kansas immediately reverberated across the Missouri River in Platte County, Missouri just north of Kansas City. Rev. Thomas Lamar served as the

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[108] William Warren Sweet, "Some Religious Aspects of the Kansas Struggle," *The Journal of Religion* 7, no. 5/6 (1927): 587-591; Jeremy Neely, *The Border Between Them: Violence and Reconciliation on the Kansas-Missouri Line* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 37 et seq.

[109] Jay Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-1865* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 9 et seq.; Neely, *The Border Between Them,* 44-47, 54-59, 69.

AHMS missionary in Weston and Rev. George Woodward served as the missionary in Parkville, both in Platte County. Platte County was located only eighteen miles from Fort Leavenworth, fifty-five miles from Lawrence and forty-five miles from Lecompton, Kansas.

The burgeoning Kansas population and an ongoing drought during the summer of 1854 placed stress on the Platte County economy. Newly arriving Kansas settlers hadn't yet been able to plant and harvest crops. Consequently, they were forced to rely on nearby, drought-stricken Platte County for food and other necessities. As the drought worsened and crops began to fail, food prices increased to the highest level that Rev. Woodward had ever known. The economic stress occasioned by the drought inevitably filtered through and adversely affected his church's finances.

That summer, Platte County churches began losing congregants through emigration to Kansas. In Weston, Rev. Thomas Lamar's congregation consisted largely of farmers who either rented or owned small parcels of land. To them, the prospect of acquiring newly-opened land in Kansas, so close nearby, was irresistible. A large portion of Rev. Lamar's congregation planned to leave. In June, thirty-two Platte County residents laid out the new town of Leavenworth just south of the army fort. [110]

The slavery issue created "great excitement." So much so, that Rev. Lamar's congregation grew "cold and indifferent" toward religion. A Platte County Defense Association – a secret society reportedly including prominent Platte County citizens – was formed in July and began holding "inflammatory meetings." The association passed a resolution affirming slavery to be a "political and moral good." Its members bound themselves to go to Kansas "armed and prepared to expel all emigrants who may come

[110] Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, October 29, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 1059, 1060); Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, August 19, 1856 (Reel 157, 222); Sengupta, *For God and Mammon,* 29.

there under the direction of the Emigrant Aid Society." To its members, only "extraordinary exertions" would prevent Kansas from becoming a free state. Rev. Lamar was told that, if they failed in their efforts, they planned to move to Texas.

Rev. Lamar felt – maybe too optimistically – that many Missourians out-migrating to Kansas, privately, would vote for Kansas to become a free state. However, he felt that it would be a mistake to rely on them to carry the issue. While they might provide support, "proper persons from the north" needed to direct the effort. In this, he saw an important role for the AHMS. It should immediately send missionaries to Kansas in order to "control and direct public sentiment." The AHMS apparently agreed. In 1857, it commissioned four recent Andover Theological Seminary graduates calling themselves the "Kansas Band" to serve as missionaries there. By 1859, the AHMS had increased this number to fourteen. [111]

In November, 1854, Rev. Lamar accepted the inevitable. Emigration to Kansas had rendered him useless in Weston. "The Platte County Presbyterian Church…is now dissolved." He planned to move to Kansas in the spring once it was safe to cross the Missouri River. He was actively considering locating in Kickapoo City, four miles north of Leavenworth. He expected it to become a place of considerable business and importance. Already the area was "dotted over with log cabins." A saw mill had begun operation and, a weekly newspaper, the *Kansas Pioneer*, was being published.[112]

In Parkville, the Kansas excitement resulted in more than inflammatory resolutions. There, mobs attacked the local newspaper and threw its press into the Missouri River. Rev. Woodward's Presbyterian Church was anti-slavery and was locally

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[111] November 1854 *Home Missionary,* 171-173; Lamar to Badger, August 28, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 821); Sengupta, *For God and Mammon,* 34, 70, 71.

[112] Lamar to Badger, August 28, 156 (Reel 156, Image 821 et seq.); Lamar to Badger, November 28, 1854 (Reel 156, Image 823); Lamar to Badger, February 1, 1855 (Reel 156, Image 1129 et seq.).

known as an "abolition hole." The editor and assistant editor of the local newspaper were both prominent members of his church. In fact, their substantial contributions enabled the church to pay much of Rev. Woodward's salary. With the loss of the press, that source of revenue was now in doubt. Rev. Woodward lamented the passivity of his members in the face of the mob violence. They had clearly been intimidated. They were "over awed" and had "remained silent" as the press was thrown into the river. [113]

Even across the state, in Bremen, Rev. Timothy Hill's church felt the impact of the Kansas troubles. The public mind had been aroused "to a state of agitation and ferment" which had excited "the worst passions of the people." Rev. Hill feared that his congregation would melt away through emigration. "The few members who compose my church expect to move over to Kansas Territory in the fall, or early spring…This will break up our church organization and render it useless for me to continue to labor in my present field…Since the opening of the Kansas Territory for settlement, the people…have been excited in reference to slavery and politics, to such an extent, as to grow cold and indifferent on the subject of religion." [114]

In August, 1856, just as Rev. Woodward was beginning to believe that peace was returning to Platte County, the troubles broke out again with "renewed fury." Wild reports arrived that James H. Lane had entered Kansas with from 300 to 900 men, had attacked and burned the town of Lecompton during a pitched battle in which 40 were killed, had released Governor Charles Robinson and John Brown and had taken the acting governor and federal soldiers as prisoner. [115]

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[113] Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, January 2, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 214-216); Hill to Badger, March 11, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 217); Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, November 19, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 225).
[114] June 1855 *Home Missionary,* 43, 44.
[115] Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, August 19, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 222, 223).

Also that summer, St. Joseph, Missouri, pastor J. B. Madoulet reported that his church was living in a critical period. The ongoing troubles created a situation very unfavorable to religion. Sadly, murder had become the order of the day. In only a short time, five murders had taken place. The last occurred when a band of pro-slavery men invaded a Northern Methodist meeting. There, they confronted the minister, an old man of seventy or eighty years, and told him that he had five minutes to get out. The minister objected to this treatment and, in consequence, was "shot on the very spot." [116]

By November, 1856, with Governor John W. Geary's arrival in Kansas, Rev. Woodward began to feel that matters were beginning to right themselves in Weston. He began to see Kansas as a promising field. The new town of Quindaro was springing up on former Wyandotte Indian lands and boosters were promoting it as likely to become the largest town in Kansas. "Eastern men and Eastern capital are there" and everyone was anxious to purchase town shares. It was an investment that "must" be profitable. Rumors circulated that a railroad would be built from Burlington to Quindaro and, thence, to Lawrence. A "railroad mania" was now "fully up" and "[s]peculation is the order of the day." Local real estate prices had recently increased by thirty percent.

To Rev. Woodward, all of this was reason for optimism. Newly emerging business opportunities would kill the "fire eating" rage that had prevailed for so long. Now, free-state and pro-slavery men "were freely mingling together, consulting their mutual interests." Rev. Woodward was thus encouraged to hope. Sadly, for Missouri, the troubles were only beginning. [117]

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[116] Madoulet to Coe, July 1856 (Reel 157, Image 88 et seq.).

[117] Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, November 19, 1856 (Reel 157, Image 225 et seq.); Woodward to Badger, Coe and Noyes, February, 19, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 356 et seq.).

In May 1860, only about a year before the outbreak of war, Rev. Julian Sturtevant, Jr., arrived in Hannibal, Missouri. Recently ordained, he began work as pastor of the Hannibal Congregational Church. He was the son of a clergyman of the same name, who served as president of Illinois College and was a close friend of Abraham Lincoln. To Rev. Sturtevant, his church was comprised of "self-denying Christians mostly from the East" and represented the "only absolutely loyal church" in Hannibal. It was widely known as the only church to have unanimously stood for freeing Missouri from the curse of slavery. [118]

The church had only recently been formed. It was small and, as a Congregational Church, was hindered by the traditional hostility of Missourians toward abolition churches. Nevertheless, for the first year, the church prospered. "Then the war came on. The secession flag was flung to the breeze all over the city and it was openly proclaimed that all Northern men would soon be driven out or be forced to become Secessionist. Our little church not having a slaveholder in it – and having always gone by the name of the 'Black Republican' or 'Abolition' Church, had no Secessionists in it [and] was the…object of their hatred and threats. Never, for many months did I hear the fire bells without going to the window to see if the church building was in flames." [119]

The war wrecked the church's finances. Some of his members left Missouri "amidst the general breaking up in the community." Others found themselves unable to meet their pledges of support. Rev. Sturtevant took a cut in salary but still feared for his church's survival. Nevertheless, when a brother minister suggested that the church seek AHMS aid, Rev. Sturtevant was initially hesitant. He was aware that the war had placed

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[118] Sturtevant to Badger, Noyes and Coe, November 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 485, 488-490); Howard, *Conscience and Slavery,* 146, 181.
[119] Sturtevant to Badger, Noyes and Coe, November 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 454, 487).

the AHMS itself under financial pressure. However, in the end, he and the church felt compelled to do so "or go down and die." [120]

To Rev. Sturtevant, closing the church would be intolerable. "We have held on our way in the midst of peril and fears. We have looked upon this as a part of the battle ground where the greatest questions of the present Century are to be settled and have determined to stand to our part. We are as one man on the present issues while all other churches are divided and most of them strongly on the session side." In November, 1861, the elders of his church applied to the AHMS for aid. The AHMS granted the application and provided support, thereby re-entering Missouri. [121]

The pre-war troubles in Kansas had ended with free-state interests prevailing over pro-slavery ones. Free-state interests had proven to be better organized and financed. This hadn't gone down well in Missouri. The northern press had depicted Missouri whites as primitive and degraded. They were portrayed as representatives of a discredited, feudal past and an impediment to economic development. In time, their backwardness would be replaced by the North's enlightened, free labor system. This depiction rankled. It contrasted sharply with the Missourians self-image as an independent yeomanry. Northerners were in no position to sit in judgment. They were likely to be abolitionist or abolitionist hirelings, impoverished urban slum dwellers, or the refuse of Europe. As the products of an impersonal, industrial system, they were the antithesis of the yeoman ideal. When the Civil War began, this simmering hostility – and a desire to settle old scores – reemerged violently.

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[120] Ibid. (Reel 157, Image 454, 485-488).

[121] Application by elders of First Congregational Church of Hannibal, November 8, 1861 (Reel 157, Image 453, 454).

In most parts of the country during the war, Union and Confederate armies fought along relatively defined battle lines. This was not the case in Missouri. While martial law was declared in August, 1861, regular soldiers were never present in sufficient numbers to maintain order. In consequence, local citizens took up arms against each other in a spontaneous guerilla war. As in pre-war Kansas and Missouri, the fighting set up a cycle of violent retribution. The combatants were variously motivated, some by ideology, others by a desire for food, arms or stolen goods. Most, however, were motivated by a desire for revenge in the ongoing tit-for-tat violence.

Confederate guerillas sometimes dressed as Union soldiers and Union troops sometimes posed as guerillas dressed as Union troops. Soldiers often engaged in "jayhawking" – a type of self-interested foraging and theft. Union troops from Kansas, operating in western Missouri, were particularly abusive. Local militias didn't represent the interests of the entire community but, rather, only one component of it. No one was allowed to remain neutral in the conflict. The terror in daily life grew, in large measure, out of the fact that no one knew for certain with whom they were dealing. [122]

Secessionist sentiment in Missouri was strongest in the rural areas. Often, towns became garrisoned islands surrounded by a hostile countryside. Wartime Hannibal was one of these. During the summer of 1862, Hannibal went through "fearful times." It was in almost daily danger of attack. Fighting had been "all around" and members of Rev. Sturtevant's church were involved – to his great relief without casualty.

The ongoing guerilla threat gave an odd aspect to daily life: "[o]ne day, we have been all in and prepared to ward off an attack, and the next, business of every kind went on just as usual." The turmoil had the lamentable effect of distracting people from

[122] Fellman, *Inside War,* 11-38, 54; Neely, *The Border Between Them,* 40, 104-108, 115, 130.

religion and making them "reckless" with regard to church attendance. Young men, the sons of pious members, had come to feel that the restraints of home and church had been erased. They now asked how someone could live under these circumstances and still be a Christian.

In May, 1862, "in response to a Congressional resolution looking to the abolition of slavery in the border states," approximately four or five hundred Hannibal citizens met and adopted their own resolution supporting abolition. Rev. Sturtevant believed it to be the first such resolution from Missouri. While not perfect, Rev. Sturtevant thought it noteworthy. For one thing, it was prepared by a committee, a majority of which were slaveholders. It was then adopted on the recommendation of three speakers, two of whom were slaveholders. To Sturtevant, this represented an entirely new development. "It means progress." [123]

In consequence of the war, for the first time people were taking a public stand against slavery. Those previously feeling unable to speak now did so. Rev. Sturtevant's sermons condemning slavery were now being given a better hearing. "This war in its direct influences is fearfully demoralizing but indirectly is a wonderful teacher of truth." "The same spirit that, for years, cried 'abolition' and drove Christian men from Missouri, later produced secession and now suffering." Rev. Sturtevant did not expect pre-war attitudes ever to return. The last six months had created a foothold worth maintaining. "Thank God for this fearful war. 'He doeth all things well.'" [124]

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[123] Sturtevant to Messrs. Badger, Coe and Noyes, May 12, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 480, 481); Sturtevant to Badger Coe and Noyes, July 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 475); Sturtevant to Badger, Coe and Noyes, August 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 482, 486).

[124] Sturtevant to Badger, Coe and Noyes, August 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 482, 483); Sturtevant to Coe, December 27, 1861 (Reel 157, Image 459, 460); Sturtevant to Badger, Coe and Noyes, May 12, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 480, 481).

By November, 1862, matters had grown quieter. Although guerillas were often "quite near," Hannibal was better prepared. Federal authorities urged Unionists to form militias. In Hannibal, one was formed and Rev. Sturtevant joined. "I myself have joined the ranks of the home defense & drill regularly every day." To Rev. Sturtevant, his role as a soldier represented an "indispensable illustration" of his convictions. [125]

Rev. Sturtevant saw the tide as having turned against the secessionists. The Unionist state government was now stronger and those who supported it were now more popular. Quoting Lincoln, Rev. Sturtevant concluded that people had grown weary of living in "a house divided against itself." Attendance at his church was up, largely at the expense of the disloyal churches. Rev. Sturtevant believed that, to many, the minister's loyalty was the determining factor in their choice of church. Many had concluded that "[s]ecession is apostasy from God as well as from loyalty." [126]

The Old School and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church had split in 1837, largely over the issue of cooperating with the Congregationalist in the AHMS. After the split, the New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists continued working together in AHMS. Cooperation wasn't always easy, however. Friction developed as each denomination saw the other as seeking advantage. In 1855, New School Presbyterians created a Committee on Church Extension. They insisted that the new committee was only intended to supplement AHMS efforts but the AHMS denounced it as an abandonment of cooperation. As New School contributions declined, in May, 1860, the AHMS determined to limit aid to New School churches to the amounts they provided in contributions. Finally, in May 1861, New School Presbyterians formed a

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[125] Sturtevant to Badger, Coe and Noyes, August 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 482, 483); Fellman, *Inside War,* 54.

[126] Sturtevant to Badger, Coe and Noyes, November 8, 1862 (Reel 157, Image 485, 489); Sturtevant to Badger, October 6, 1863 (Reel 157, Image 527, 528).

Committee of Home Missions to conduct mission work. This effectively ended Presbyterian participation in the AHMS. The AHMS then became an exclusively Congregationalist society and, in 1893, it renamed itself the Congressional Home Missionary Society.[127]

In pre-war Missouri, the Congregationalists had been unsuccessful in establishing churches. To Missourians, they represented twin evils. They were Yankee and abolitionist. Traditionally, as Congregationalists moved south and west, they affiliated with Presbyterian Churches. Consequently, the AHMS conducted mission work in Missouri primarily through Presbyterian churches. With the end of the war faintly in sight – and with the AHMS now an exclusively Congregationalist society – Rev. Sturtevant saw an opportunity to change this. [128]

During the war, Missouri churches had largely fallen apart as men left to join the warring armies. This deprived churches both of members and financial support. The AHMS conducted limited activities in Missouri during the war, further starving churches of funds. By August 1863, the situation in Hannibal had stabilized sufficiently for Rev. Sturtevant to plan beyond the end of the war. Rev. Sturtevant believed that Congregationalists could now compete for members as Missourians returned to religion after a wartime hiatus and as in-migration renewed.

He saw the Northern Methodists as likely representing the Congregationalists' chief competition. They had already seen the "grand opportunity" and were aggressively seeking to organize churches. They had a reputation for being loyal and anti-slavery and

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[127] Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 240-243, 299-301; Thrift, *The Operations of the American Home Missionary Society in the South,* 115, 116, 118-120; Griffin, "Cooperation and Conflict", 226-229; Frederic, Kuhns, "End of Joint Missionary Work by the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in 1861" *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 28, no. 4 (1950): 259 et seq.

[128] Turner to "Sec. A.H.M.S.," March 1, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 710, 716); Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 252.

were thus well positioned. In this regard, however, the Congregationalists also enjoyed a good reputation. Rev. Sturtevant, therefore, urged the AHMS to send a roving agent for northern Missouri to survey the ground in order to be ready when the war ended. [129]

AHMS missionaries began arriving in Missouri as the war began to wind down. They brought with them a new enthusiasm and sense of purpose. They came to spread Congregationalism and to provide needed aid. Rev. Edwin Harlow was among them. He arrived in Atchisson, Kansas in December 1863 and, shortly thereafter, moved to Kansas City, Missouri. There, he organized two churches, one for whites and the other for freedmen. In doing so, he sometimes visited up to sixteen families each day.

Rev. Harlow represented a mix of New England condescension and eagerness to help. "I find the people exceeding ignorant in every sense of the word. Among such, results do not usually appear in a day. It is a work of patience and love. I have been received pleasantly – sometimes cordially. I do not believe my labor lost…. I have twice or thrice been exceedingly disheartened. But generally have been sanguine."

His true commitment, however, was to bring the New England free school to Missouri. He lamented the fact that Kansas City, with its 6,000 inhabitants, had never had such a school. Parents, often unable to pay private school tuition, saw their children grow up in ignorance. Most of these children did not even attend Sabbath school, preferring instead to play marbles in the street.

He immediately set about to remedy the situation. He quickly founded a "colored school" of approximately 40 to 60 pupils. The families of students paid nearly all of the school's expenses out of their "frail means." This goal of bringing the free school to Kansas City gave him enthusiasm. "I like this work very much. I find it <u>work</u>. Here, as

[129] Sturtevant to Coe, August 17, 1863 (Reel 157, Image 526-529).

when a child on my father's stony farm in Maine, I find some parts of my work in themselves unpleasant. But when I do it for Jesus' sake, that glorifies the work & blesses me….Certainly, I would not dare to leave this place voluntarily."

Even Rev. Harlow's enthusiasm couldn't change the reality of wartime Missouri. In 1864, Kansas City abutted Unionist Kansas but was otherwise surrounded by rural areas, still secessionist in sympathy. These surrounding areas contained bushwhackers – "a malignant sort of guerilla" – which created a sense of insecurity. Their depredations crippled business and hampered Rev. Harlow's work. He had hoped Kansas City would be spared further trouble. In April, 1864, however, Confederate forces defeated the Union Army at Mansfield, Louisiana. "General Bank's defeat on the Red river has let loose all the Rebel cavalry West of the Mississippi for partisan warfare." Consequently, by July, 1864, many had left the city, among them "friends of our enterprise."

In August, 1864, perhaps encouraged by General Bank's defeat, a Confederate army under the command of General Sterling Price invaded Missouri from Arkansas. During August and September, the Confederates slowly made their way through Missouri and, by late October, captured Independence, Missouri just east of Kansas City. As the Confederate Army approached Kansas City, Rev. Harlow began to feel his position becoming increasingly untenable. "The guerillas have been closing in all summer, and now one of the Rebel armies is threatening us. In view of these & other facts, I have been advised by esteemed brethren that I could doubtless be more useful elsewhere. Hence it is quite probable that any next report will be dated at another place."[130]

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[130] Harlow to Badger, December 19, 1863 (Reel 157, Image 512-514); Harlow to Noyes, February 10, 1864 (Reel 157, Image 555-560); Harlow to "Secretaries A.H.M. Society," March 31, 1864 (Reel 157, Image 561-562); Harlow to "Secretaries of A.H.M.," April 6, 1864 (Reel 157, Image 566-567); Harlow to "Secretaries A.H.M. Soc," July 1, 1864 (Reel 157, Image 567-568); Harlow to Noyes, October 7, 1864 (Reel 157, Image 569, 570); Louis S. Gerteis, *The Civil War in Missouri, a Military History* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012), 179 et seq.

General Sterling Price's invasion of Missouri forced Rev. Harlow and other "friends of our enterprise" to abandon Kansas City. Despite this setback, newly arriving AHMS missionaries in Missouri were clearly optimistic regarding the long term. Because of longstanding prejudice against the Congregationalists, as northern and abolitionist, prior to the Presbyterian withdrawal from the AHMS in 1861, it had always conducted mission work in Missouri through New School churches. With the war ending, and with slavery and secession seemingly falling into disfavor, the now solely Congregationalist AHMS felt that public opinion was turning its way. Congregationalism in Missouri might now be given a chance.

AHMS and War's End in Missouri.

In late December, 1864, the AHMS hired Rev. E.B. Turner to serve as its agent for northern Missouri. His job was to tour of the towns along the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad line to assess the potential for reviving missionary work. He began his work on Christmas day by preaching to Rev. Sturtevant's congregation in Hannibal. He then followed the route of the railroad line, by his account, traveling 2,400 miles by rail, on horseback and by foot. He called on seventy-five families, sometimes traveling up to four or five miles on foot at a time in order to make visits.

Missouri had been devastated by the war and was not yet fully pacified. Even in the northern part of the state, Rev. Turner found a prevailing fear that bushwhackers would be back in the spring "worse than ever." With state government now in loyal hands, Rev. Turner hoped that the fear of guerilla attack would prove to be overblown. However, he conceded that it wasn't yet clear that God planned for the war to end. There was still much "bitter disloyalty" in Missouri. As such, no one could know for certain "what further judgments God might see fit to send upon this guilty people." In true Calvinist fashion, he admitted that "another scourging may be necessary." [131]

In the areas still controlled by guerillas, fear of attack had a paralyzing effect, making it still too early "to vigorously take hold of the work." Historically, the principal slave-owning region of Missouri had been a belt running along the north and south sides of the Missouri River. Now, as a result of the war, the once prosperous river towns of Brunswick and Livingston were "almost dead." "There are no live Yankees there and none are expected." The inhabitants were still secessionist in sympathy and "didn't care to see Union people moving in." South of the slaveholding belt was an area populated

[131] Turner to Badger, January 5, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 698-700); Turner to "Secretaries A.H.M. Soc.," March 1, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 707).

largely by southern mountain whites. Although not generally slaveholders, they were often strongly hostile to blacks and abolition. This area remained "infested" by guerillas and unpacified. To Rev. Turner, only if the new state constitution, which disenfranchised secessionists, were adopted by a large majority at the election scheduled for June, 1865, would the time be right to clear the state of remaining ruffians.[132]

During the war, all of Missouri's colleges had closed. In September, 1861, the Masonic College in Lexington, Missouri had been the site of a large battle. Union troops, comprised largely of Irish- and German-immigrants, had cut down a grove of trees and fortified the campus. Confederates under the command of General Sterling Price had attacked this position from behind movable breastworks made of hemp bales. They captured the Masonic College and took the defenders captive. During the course of the battle, artillery fire severely battered the college. Its walls and pilasters were damaged by rifle balls – Rev. Turner counted over one hundred such holes – and the buildings were later stripped of doors and windows.

Further east, in Brunswick, the female seminary was now also in ruins. The Union Army had used it as quarters for its troops. Like the Masonic College, it was now missing doors and windows. Also like the Masonic College, the beautiful grove of trees that had formerly surrounded the seminary was cut down by the Union Army and used as breastworks.

The war had also closed Missouri's churches. In 1860, two churches were built in Hannibal, one Southern Methodist and the other Cumberland Presbyterian. Each was able to accommodate two hundred and fifty occupants. However, when the war came, they had both "exploded" in consequence of their secessionist and pro-slavery

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[132] Fellman, *Inside War,* 7; Turner to "Secretaries of A.H.M. Soc.," May 23, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 713, 716).

sympathies. When Rev. Turner visited in February, 1865, they contained only three or four members each. The rest of the membership had scattered, some into the Confederate Army and others back east. One of the two church buildings was now occupied by Union soldiers and enclosed by a stockade. [133]

In pre-war Missouri, an individual's church often told much about his position with regard to sectional matters. Southern Methodists and Old School Presbyterians were seen as pro-slavery, southern sympathizers. The Disciples of Christ were largely seen to be neutral. New School Presbyterians were thought to be anti-slavery, partly in contrast with the pro-slavery Old School Presbyterians and partly due to their collaboration with the Congregationalists in supporting the AHMS. The Congregationalists and Northern Methodists were universally seen to be anti-slavery, northern sympathizers. Before the war, this typing favored denominations with southern sympathies. Indeed, Northern Methodists immigrating to Missouri before the war, for business and social reasons, often affiliated with the Southern Methodists.[134]

In the early days of the war, many of the churches and their ministers had actively promoted secession. Northern preachers were often threatened with violence, driven from the state and their churches broken up. Now, the reverse was taking place. Rev. Turner saw this through a loyalist lens. To him, rather than being forced out, pro-southern pastors were guilty of having "absconded," thereby abandoning their flock. Rev. Turner felt that their congregants were now seeing the light. An old man, an elder in an Old School Presbyterian church, nearly broke down on meeting Rev. Turner, stating "you are the first minister that has been along here since 1861." Others he encountered told him

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[133] Turner to Badger, October 13, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 731-733); Turner to Badger, February 8, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 702, 703); Holter, *The Beginnings of Protestantism in the Trans-Missouri,* 142; Monaghan, *Civil War on the Western Border*, 182 et seq.;

[134] Holter, *The Beginnings of Protestantism in the Trans-Missouri,* 57-60, 163, 164; Hill to Coe, March 10, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 266, 267).

that they didn't care about denominational differences. They would be happy to join any church so long as it "preaches the four Gospels and is loyal to the government."[135]

Despite newly developed hope that Congregationalism could gain a wider following, Rev. Turner knew that he faced a particular struggle. In many places, southern sympathies still predominated. As Rev. Turner noted, "[t]he venom of slavery has poisoned the public mind to an extent almost inconceivable." Given these lingering attitudes, the ravages of war and the humiliation of defeat, more time was needed. Moreover, renewed in-migration by an "eastern element" was also required. "[T]he right sort of people are not here yet in sufficient numbers to warrant organization of our order at once – there is a strong denominational prejudice to overcome." [136]

Rev. Turner's saw his first task as promoting immigration from the free states. To encourage this, Rev. Turner wrote a circular titled "A Plea for Missouri." The Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad Company paid for it to be printed and mailed. The AHMS published a copy in the *Home Missionary*. Rev. Turner asked that it be sent "all over New England" to provide important facts "right away." The "great state of Missouri is now free! The reign of slavery is now ended!" It urged farmers to take advantage of cheap farmland, mechanics of a tight labor market, teachers of a $5.0 million school fund and ministers of the absence of preachers in a large number of towns along the railroad line. By immigrating, New Englanders would enable Missouri, with its central location, healthful climate, cheap lands, and untold mineral wealth to determine "the character of a future empire." [137]

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[135] Turner to Badger, January 5, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 698, 699); Turner to "Secretaries A.H.M. Soc.," March 1, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 707-710).
[136] Application for aid by the First Congregational Church of Memphis, Missouri to Badger and Coe, October 23, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 694, 695); Turner to "Secretaries A.H.M. Soc.," March 1, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 707, 710).
[137] Turner to Badger, February 8, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 702-706); April 1865 *Home Missionary,* 295.

With the end of the war, the AHMS envisioned the emergence of a new South. Like the "great landed estates of Russia," southern plantations would be "divided up among small proprietors and the freed negroes." They would then acquire the habits of thrift and accumulation which come from self-dependence. The United States would "enter upon a career of prosperity; power and glory such as could never have been possible with the loathsome weight of slavery hanging upon its neck." The AHMS planned to be there, in places like Missouri, to participate in the creation of the new age.[138]

Rev. Turner thus saw hope for Congregationalism in Missouri – at least in the longer term. Wherever he went, individuals from all denominations expressed a strong desire for reorganized religion to be re-instituted. Congregationalism needed to make "a strong and persevering effort" and the AHMS needed to play a primary role. Rivals to this effort were emerging. The Northern Methodists, with their strong loyalist credentials, were already active in gathering together loyalist remains of scattered churches. Other denominations, while currently "dead," were also beginning to stir. Given the reversal of pre-war sentiments, Rev. Turner hoped that, if the Congregationalists began organizing, "we shall stand at least an equal chance." [139]

The war's end didn't mean the end of hostilities. Guerilla conflict continued for several months after the Confederate surrender at Appomattox in April, 1865. Returning soldiers and guerillas found it difficult to reintegrate into civilian life after the bitter, costly war. In July, 1865, Rev. E.B. Turner recruited the Rev. George Stinson to serve as a pastor in Maysville, Missouri. Only four hours after he arrived, a hotel keeper, one of the principal members of his planned church, was shot down in the street by a "border

[138] April 1865 *Home Missionary,* 297.
[139] Turner to Badger, October 13, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 731, 732).

ruffian." The man lingered for three weeks before "we followed his remains to the grave." His death cast a long shadow over Rev. Stinson's introduction to Maysville and "shrouded our entire prospect in gloom." He quickly decided that Maysville contained "but little of the right kind of material" for a Congregational Church and relocated to a town six miles distant. [140]

In December, Rev. Stinson unexpectedly died. He left a wife "alone among strangers" with four helpless children and little means of support. She nevertheless bore up under her loss admirably. Rev. Turner had "rarely seen such an exhibition of fortitude." Rev. Turner presided at the funeral on a bitter, cold day with the ground covered with sleet and ice. The funeral procession consisted of two wagons, one to carry the corpse and the other to carry the afflicted mother and children seated on straw. Members of Rev. Stinson's congregation followed behind on foot. Rev. Stinson was buried in the Maysville cemetery, "merely an open space without a fence containing a few unprotected graves." Rev. Turner was glad that Rev. Stinson, on his "near approach to eternity," had "showed that the Redeemer was still precious to him." Given Rev. Stinson's piety and faithful labors, despite the obvious shortcomings of his final resting place, Rev. Turner was thus able to see it as "handsome spot." [141]

Another new arrival, Rev. E.D. Seward, similarly saw his missionary work as worthy. He had previously served as an AHMS missionary in Wisconsin and arrived in Laclede, Missouri, in March, 1865. Rev. Seward immediately organized and served as superintendent of Sabbath schools for white and black children. His family served as the school's teachers. One of his daughters also taught in a day school for black children.

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[140] Stinson to Badger, September 2, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 632-684); Fellman, *Inside War,* 231; Neely, *The Border Between Them,* 130, 131.
[141] Turner to Badger, December 20, 1865, (Reel 157, Image 743, 744).

He asked the AHMS for clothing boxes and distributed their contents to the poor. One recipient was a black woman struggling to support her four children after her husband, a returning soldier, abandoned her. The other was a poor "but worthy" white family from the "back country" with a large number of children. The man had lost his team of horses, one through death and the other by theft. The box of clothing was particularly helpful to this family as the wife had waited to attend church until she had decent clothing to wear. Given the obvious good he was doing, Rev. Seward was able to report "we are not homesick or discouraged." [142]

As the war ended, Rev. Turner also recruited Rev. M. Leffingwell to work to reinstitute religion in post-war Missouri. He his wife traveled 1,500 miles from New Hampshire to Cameron, Missouri. In doing so, they "bid farewell to the home of our childhood, the society of our relatives & the graves of our parents and children." To Rev. Leffingwell, severing ties to New England was difficult and "the thought of finding a home 171 miles west of the Mississippi in a land made desolate…by the rebellion… was far from pleasant."

Cameron, Missouri had indeed been devastated. Nearly every man had served in one of the two armies. Farms remained uncultivated from the lack of farm labor and from the constant fear of guerilla activity. The previous year's drought had compounded the difficulty, making it difficult to produce crops and greatly increasing prices.

Although Rev. Leffingwell knew to expect hardship, his actual experience was worse than he could have imagined. He could not find suitable accommodation at any price. Houses, amounting to little more than shanties, rented for $100 per year. Water wells were scarce and of such poor quality that rain water catchment formed the principal

[142] Seward to Badger, July 17, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 664-667).

means for obtaining drinking water. Rev. Leffingwell's newly organized Congregational Church was forced to conduct services in a railroad depot, "a very dirty and inconvenient place."

Rev. Leffingwell found the "moral destitution" to be even greater than the physical. Card playing, drunkenness and every sort of immorality were rampant. In Cameron no more than three sermons per year had been preached during the entire war. Local residents had become satisfied with only an occasional sermon by an "illiterate itinerant." Things were so bad that a minister "could haul wood his door, prepare the same for his fire, make & receive visitors on the Sabbath & still be in perfectly good standing the eyes of many." The local population did not yet see the need for a settled minister. "The demand for anything better has yet to be created." Worse, they felt little need to provide financial support "as Eastern usage requires."

Sadly, shortly after their arrival, Rev. Leffingwell's wife became sick. She had always enjoyed good health and had been "useful in every department of labor belonging to a minister's wife." Nevertheless, in consequence of her illness, "she closed her pilgrimage in this land of strangers & [went] to her reward." Her last service had been to entertain the council that convened in their home to organize the new church. [143]

Rev. Turner recruited Rev. O.A. Thomas in December, 1865, to serve in Richmond, Missouri. Located on the Missouri River, it was in the heart of slaveholding country. It contained approximately two thousand residents, of whom approximately five or six hundreds were emancipated slaves. Most of the town's early settlers had come from Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky and remained strong southern sympathizers.

[143] Leffingwell to "A.H.M.S.," September 15, 1865 (Reel 157, Image 643-647).

Richmond had been home to guerillas and was the scene of the "most bloody, brutal deeds of robbery & murder." Richmond and the surrounding area had been "stripped and ravaged" by the war. In consequence of defeat, secessionists felt obliged to assume an attitude of "meekness and submission." Not always, however. A returned Confederate soldier, "under the stimulus of bad whiskey," had recently fired his revolver at the head of a Union soldier. The Union soldier suffered only a slight wound but, in the course of the fight, wrenched the gun away from the Confederate and "broke it" over his head. Given the ongoing spirit of rebellion, Rev. Thomas was forced to conclude that forming a Congregational Church was unlikely to succeed and, therefore, decided to seek another field. [144]

To the AHMS, the war created an opportunity for Congregationalism in Missouri. In the following decade, it organized eighty-five Congregational churches there. It remained a tough sell, however. Secession and slavery may have lost appeal, but the war hadn't otherwise changed the state's religious dynamics. The Congregationalist emphasis on decorous services and reasoned preaching better suited New England tastes than those of Missouri. Despite Rev. Turner's "A Plea for Missouri" – touting Missouri's many virtues – in-migration from New England remained low. Even in neighboring Kansas, where Congregationalism got an early head-start, it was unable to maintain momentum. By 1880, measured by number of adherents, the Congregationalists in Missouri ranked last behind the Methodists, Baptists, Disciples of Christ and Presbyterians. [145]

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[144] Thomas to Coe, December 4, 1865 (Reel 157, 688, 689).
[145] Holter, "The Beginnings of Protestantism in the Trans-Missouri," 132, 140.

Conclusion

In 1857, in Troy, Missouri, Rev. E.P. Noel looked back over his life and work. "There is something sad, in the closing of a year and in the rapid flight of time. I have lived to be fifty as the year closes. I have lived long enough to see many that were once my associates in life, and in the ministry, pass away. Father, mother, brother, sisters and almost all of the friends of my early youth are gone…my brethren in the ministry … who stood shoulder to shoulder with me … are all gone to be with Christ. I look around and ask, where are the aspirations of early youth." [146]

Rev. Noel clearly held reservations regarding the course of his life and work and whether he had fulfilled early aspirations. What about the AHMS? Did it fulfil its early aspirations? The society began in 1826 with the hope of spreading the Gospel in the West, thereby securing the American republic and laying the foundation for the millennium. It hoped to save the West from the pernicious effects of Catholicism and rationalism and the unlettered ignorance of the Baptists and Methodists. It hoped to replicate New England throughout the West. It paid particular attention to Missouri because of its size, location and resources. The AHMS was America's largest home missionary society and it expended great resources toward these goals.

Calvinism did spread westward and the AHMS, no doubt, assisted in that effort. However, it didn't supplant the "unlettered" Protestant denominations and didn't prevent the spread of Catholicism. Indeed, measured by numbers of churches, while the Presbyterians moved up slightly from fourth to third place in denominational ranking nationally, the Congregationalists fell. Starting in first place at the time of the Revolution, by 1860, the Congregationalists had fallen to fifth place behind the

[146] Noel to Badger, January 2, 1857 (Reel 157, Image 311).

Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Catholics. Nor did the AHMS put an end to secular impulses, the rationalism that it abhorred. The American republic survived notwithstanding. The AHMS did not build the millennium; the earth has yet to achieve a reign of peace. In the post-Civil War period, the hope that humans were creating the necessary preconditions for the millennium faded. So also, did New England Theology which has become largely a footnote in religious history.

In concentrating on its primary goal of spreading the Gospel, the AHMS tried to ignore slavery. However, under pressure, the AHMS belatedly took action denying aid to churches containing slave holding members. Its Missouri missionaries were typically anti-slavery northerners. However, for varied reasons, the principal being a fear of the loss of AHMS funding, they generally opposed the policy change.

In Missouri, the AHMS survived the fighting and destruction that preceded and accompanied the Civil War. It survived the defection of Old School Presbyterians in 1837 and New School Presbyterians in 1861. It persisted into the latter part of the nineteenth century as the Congregational Home Missionary Society and exists today under a different name. [147]

For several decades the AHMS sent out committed individuals, and their families, to endure hardship on the frontier in order to spread the Gospel. They exhibited the virtues, limitations and prejudices common to their era. Nevertheless, they performed admirably, by their lights, and conducted themselves in a courageous, self-sacrificing way, ultimately with disappointing results.

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[147] Jack Maddex, Jr. "Proslavery Millennialism: Social Eschatology in Antebellum Southern Calvinism," *American Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1979): 60-63; Moorhead, "Between Progress and Apocalypse," 541, 542; Sweeny and Guelzo, *The New England Theology,* 18, 19; Goodykoontz, *Home Missions,* 411-413; David Horvath, "American Home Missionary Society Records," Amistad Research Center at Tulane University, http://www.amistadresearchcenter.org/archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&id=11.

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